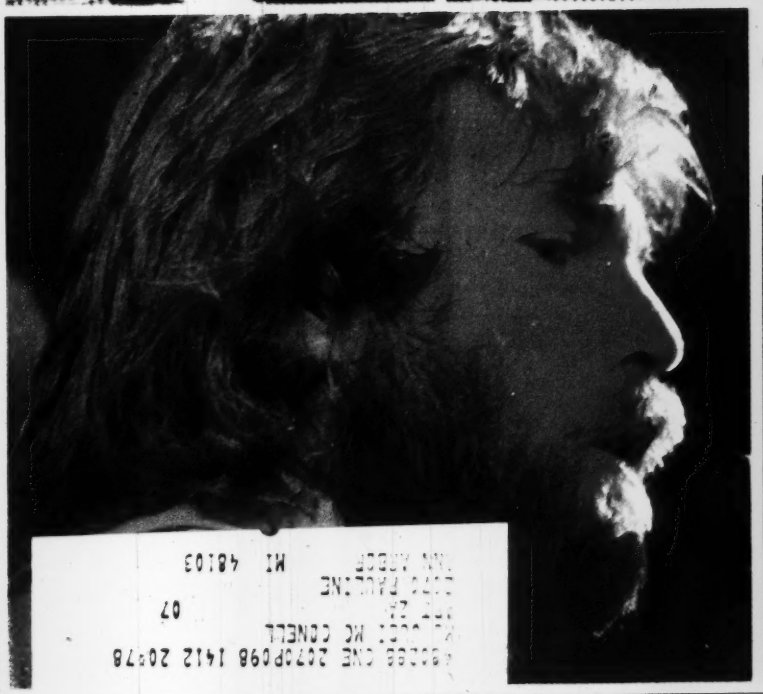
APRIL 2, 1976 75 CENTS
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

New Times

THE BEACH BOYS



Good Vibrations are back

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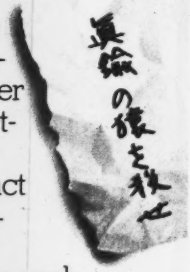
IS THE BRASS MONKEY HOLDING OUT IN THE PHILIPPINES?

Do two men stalk each other tonight under a tropic moon—an implacable Japanese intelligence officer and the man who invented the drink that defeated the Japanese Secret Service in W.W. II?

This much is on record: that a year before the war's end, the Brass Monkey Club, named after a small brass figurine in a niche by the door, was raided and closed. And that H. E. Rasske, code name Brass Monkey, his mission in Macao accomplished, took off alone in his import-export company's battered seaplane. His flight plan called for a rendezvous with a U.S. Navy submarine in the Luzon Strait where he was to receive new orders. He never arrived.

Three decades have not silenced the legend—that collection of truths, half-truths and untruths—that then spread thick as jungle briar over the 7,000 partly-submerged mountain peaks that make up the Philippine Islands. It tells of a World War II that never ended, and it links Rasske to the strange case of Captain Mori, Special Intelligence Squadron, Japanese Army. Mori's mission was spelled out in this brief directive: "Kill Brass Monkey."

The reported discovery of the same message, scratched into the trunk of a banana tree on an uninhabited island 40 miles north of Luzon, gave credence to earlier stories of a Japanese officer still fighting on, unaware that the war had ended. Leaflets were dropped, search parties organized, with no result. Two rather blurred photographs, purporting to show Mori in the jungle and published in a now-defunct scandal and adventure magazine, were officially dismissed as representing two different people.



We wonder. Perhaps there *are* two different survivors on that "uninhabited" island: Mori and Rasske. Perhaps...

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New Times

APRIL 2, 1976
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 7

TOP OF THE NEWS

"I'll talk about *anything* but DESKTOP!"

What is Project DESKTOP? Could it be a military spy ring, a missile system on the ocean floor or an underwater intelligence system aimed at other countries? Whichever, the Pentagon is desperate to keep the project a secret—from the Congress and the public.

By Michael Drosnin

Page 20

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COVER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
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THE TOURING BEACH BOYS:
CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP TO LEFT:
CARL WILSON, MIKE LOVE, ALAN JARDINE, DENNIS WILSON

TOP OF THE NEWS

A Ford not an Edsel

Many scurrilous tales have gone 'round about Ford's inability to walk and chew gum simultaneously. Our reporter now puts these rumors to rest: energized by the New Hampshire victory, the President and his campaign have experienced a Lazarus-like revival. Indeed, Ford on the hustings in Florida was a hard-hitting pol who slipped not at all.

By Ron Rosenbaum

Page 38

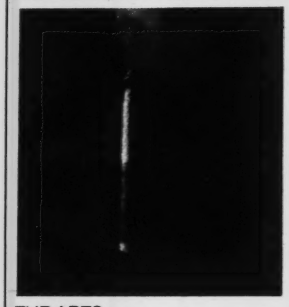
LOCAL COLOR

Showdown at Kaiparowits

For Robert Redford, it's a case of good guys v. bad guys: the bulldozers are "poised in the mouth of the canyon," awaiting Interior Secretary Kleppe's ruling on construction of the nation's largest coal-fired power plant. At stake are 10,000 square miles of Utah's breathtaking wilderness.

By Michael Parfit

Page 46



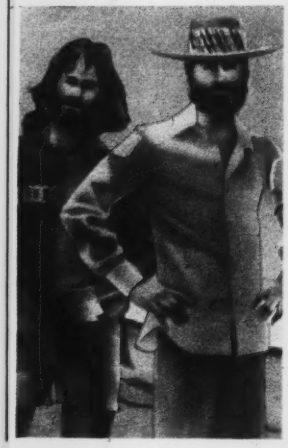
THE ARTS

The Beach Boys: riding a new wave

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi told the Beatles that if they meditated they'd stay together. They didn't, and split. He told the Beach Boys that if they meditated, they'd become the most influential group in the world. They did, and 15 years after "Surfin' Safari," good vibrations and fans' adulations are still theirs. As Carl Wilson says, they're "one of the real things."

By Neal Gabler

Page 54



Behind the scenes at New Times Page 4

Letters Page 5

Party Lines
Jimmy Carter ain't whistlin' Dixie.
By Robert Sam Anson
Page 6

The Ruling Class
President Jerry Brown?
By Robert Scheer
Page 13

Fulminations
The press and the candidates: issues (NO!) and answers (maybe).
By Larry L. King
Page 14

The Insider Page 15

REVIEWS

Movies: Robbin' and Marryin'
Love's labors aren't lost.
By Richard Corliss
Page 62

Music: Laura Nyro's restrained return
The passion's gone.
By Janet Maslin
Page 66

Books: A likely story
The Last Kennedy dives into Chappaquiddick's mire.
By Geoffrey Wolff
Page 68

Final Tribute
Convertibles take the last exit.
By Mark Goodman
Page 72

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Behind The Scenes

Those of you who have been following the Patty Hearst trial have no doubt noticed how well Bill and Emily Harris' account, published in our March 5 issue, has held up under cross-examination, both in and out of court. Shortly after we published the story, the *New York Times* independently checked and verified the Harrises' account of Patty's "capture" by law enforcement authorities in San Mateo County before her arrest. That same week, prosecutor Browning quizzed Patty on her visit to the San Francisco hospital for treatment of poison oak, also verifying the Harrises' story. More recently, Browning brought a UCLA archaeologist to the stand to testify on the small monkey figurine that was found in Patty's purse at the time of her arrest, and that the Harrises claimed was a present from Willie Wolfe—and a testament of their relationship. Perhaps the most supportive witnesses of the Harrises' version so far have been Dr. Joel Fort and Dr. Harry Kozol. As Kozol put it, "This girl [Patty] was a rebel. Because of a subtle interplay of millions of experiences in her life, she was in a state where she was ripe for the plucking. She was a rebel in search of a cause; a rebel ready for a cause and the cause found her."

We had hoped to publish part two— the origins of the SLA—in this current issue, but unfortunately we ran into a snag. Two of the four surviving SLA members whom Robert Scheer and Susan Lyne had been interviewing—Joseph Remiro and Russell Little—were unexpectedly moved from the Los Angeles County jail and placed beyond the reach of journalists, Remiro to Folsom and Little to San Quentin. Access to both had been difficult in the L.A. County jail and it now became impossible. Fortunately, their lawyers are optimistic about changing that, and we still expect to finish and print the remainder of our SLA story in the next issue, thus fulfilling our promise of April publication.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER GARFIELD/THE WASHINGTONIAN

Newsflash: Henry Kissinger is a reader of *New Times*. I can go even further—Henry Kissinger carries *New Times* on the top of the pile of papers in his briefcase. How do we know that? Because *The Washingtonian* magazine recently ran a visual smorgasbord of Capitol memorabilia, including a photograph of Kissinger's opened briefcase. There, on top, was our January 23 issue. It is still anyone's guess whether Kissinger is a faithful reader or whether a particular story in that issue had struck his fancy (or displeasure). He might, for instance, have been taking home Frances FitzGerald's account of how the CIA recruits on campus or Robert Sam Anson's cover story on John Kennedy and his Mafia moll. In any case, welcome aboard, Henry.

Anson, who should be familiar to all *New Times'* readers, begins a new political column with this issue, to be called Party Lines. Anson's column will open a new window on the '76 presidential campaign, and his excellent feature stories will continue.

George A. Hirsch

Letters

The Harris story

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to view Bill and Emily Harris ("Twenty months with Patty/Tania," March 5). This is a welcome improvement on standard media "coverage"; by allowing the Harrises to talk at length, *New Times* has given us enough of a view to prevent them from presenting a false impression of themselves (although that doesn't necessarily mean they're not lying on matters of fact). Substance replaces image. I'm looking forward to your future work.

Jason Zytor
New York City

Thank you for publishing Bill and Emily Harris' account of their captivity by the criminal genius of the 20th century, Patty Hearst. Ever since the Harrises were kidnapped, raped, beaten, starved and locked in a closet for weeks on end by Patty and her cohorts, I've been hoping they would finally break free of her domination and let the American public know what sweet, kindly, gentle, idealistic young people they really are.

Arthur Fried
Park Forest, Illinois

I have always wished I could turn more people on to your magazine. Now, thanks to scoops like your Harris exclusive, I see your name increasingly being used by other people. Keep finding the good writers and news stories you are becoming famous for. You are the *60 Minutes* of the printed page.

Joseph A. Slonaker
Denver, Colorado

I can't think of any useful purpose other than money-making which was served by publishing the Harrises' carefully self-serving version of events. Why magnify the deeds of criminals? And not even hard luck down-and-out criminals at that. Just two college graduates who found association with a murder-kidnap-robbery gang more rewarding than life in Middle America.

G.K. Cannady
Washington, D.C.

It is outrageous that Susan Lyne and Robert Scheer would try to make Emily and Bill Harris rational. The Harris duo is grotesque. They have no claim of being interesting revolutionaries; only destructive pirates spewing psychotic self-interest. How could you allow them to use *New Times* as a front for their blatant anarchy?

John Doe
Dallas, Texas

Singling out Smith

Larry King's Fulminations on the late, great H. Allen Smith touched a very responsive chord with me (March 19). Although my parents had a considerable collection of books, it didn't take me very long to single out H. Allen as my special favorite. There aren't many authors who are so funny that they can make one laugh out loud. H. Allen was an American original, one of a kind. I will miss him.

Vicki Holzhauer
Brockton, Massachusetts

Mary, quite contrary

Granted, television should grow up and deal with the realities of sex, drug abuse, VD, mass murder, etc. But including these subjects in a TV show does not automatically make it a *good* show ("Mary Hartman, the 66 44/100% pure soap," March 5). *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* is boring, boring.

Debbie Boylan
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

The hearth of the matter

Geoffrey Wolff, the author of "The wood burning stove: phoenix of the forest" (March 5), wrote that among the stoves' advantages is the plentiful wood supply. Plentiful if used in moderation. But don't think for a minute that with our present population level, we will all be able to once again return to much dependence on wood heat and leave enough trees remaining for other uses—trees do have uses besides burning. What do I support? Using coal for the next decade or two until reliance can be placed on decentralized solar and wind power, a source also of economic dependence.

Bradley Edwards
Ft. Collins, Colorado

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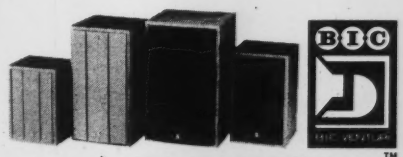

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The man liberals love to hate

Party Lines

By Robert Sam Anson

One morning last summer, in one of those New York diners where the 79 cent breakfast special is served with paper plates and plastic forks, I listened as the man across the Formica-top table calmly told me how he was going to become president.

Now New York is packed with people who think they already *are* the president, so naturally, I smiled with tolerant good humor and wondered again what it is about this place that thrives on delusions. I knew, as an expert on such affairs, that he didn't have a chance. I haven't seen Jimmy Carter since then.

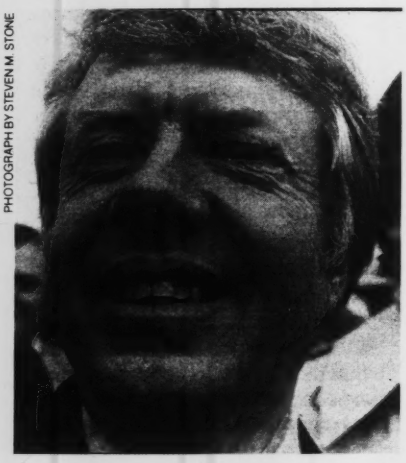
People keep telling me about him, though. A couple of weeks ago in Cambridge, in the very bowels of the liberal establishment, some of the men who made George McGovern the Democratic nominee in 1972 shuddered at the very mention of his name. "He's the most dangerous man in the country," said an organizer who had engineered one of McGovern's primary triumphs. And it's not just Cambridge. You hear the same thing wherever the right people with all the right values gather to sip white wine, nibble on cheese and despair with one another that the country is going to hell in a handbasket, and all because of this man Carter, "our Nixon," as McGovern (*our* Alf Landon) calls him.

No one ever mentions specifics; it's just a feeling they have about him, a feeling so intense that, after a while, you begin to feel guilty, as if you were a racist and a warmonger if you don't share it.

Based on a scientific sample of recently attended Manhattan cocktail parties, the most bitter opposition to Carter seems to come from, ahem, intellectuals. You know, people who are taking a class at The New School, have black friends, a Ben Shahn print on the wall and, if they happen to be Jewish, don't make a big thing about Israel. Which itself is a puzzle, since much of the feeling about Carter is so relentlessly *anti*-intellectual.

Take issues. On those few where we know Carter's stands, he could do a credible impersonation of any liberal candidate. He was late in coming out against the war, but he was never one of its cheerleaders, as was Hubert Humphrey, who seems, nonetheless, to have been clasped retroactively to the liberal bosom. He calls himself a fiscal conservative, but so does Jerry Brown, and liberals love him. He opposes abortion and busing (though he wouldn't outlaw either), but since when have matters of personal conscience, namely abortion, or elitist nincompoopery, namely busing, become true tests of the liberal faith.

The dirty little secret is that liberals hate Jimmy Carter not for what



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN M. STONE

he stands for but for who he is. A good politician (which few of them are). A man apparently untroubled by self-doubt (doesn't he know that angst is the virtue of our age?). A Southerner (read barefoot racist). And, possibly worst of all, someone who isn't afraid to say the word Jesus as something other than an expletive.

All of this says as much about liberals, and why they are so roundly detested in that great void out there between the coasts, as it does about Jimmy Carter. There is an anti-Southern bias in this country, and that comes from a man who has shared it for years. Even today, when I hear someone talk with that drawl I mentally click down a few stops, confident that I already know everything I need to know about him: the slowness, the mint juleps and black-eyed peas, the good *nigras* working out back. And I, too, wince when I hear the name Jesus. But some 31 million Americans are religious fundamentalists and, like Carter, aren't embarrassed to talk about it.

A long time ago, liberals wrote off these people, as they today write off Jimmy Carter. The South is much easier to understand if you think of it only in terms of George Wallaces and "Bull" Connors and imitation Marjoes. No matter that the South has changed radically, or that people are never alike (not even on the West Side of Manhattan), or that many folks believe in Jesus just as fervently as the smart set does in Werner Erhard. Those are our prejudices, and we are comfortable with them. Makes you wonder who are the real intellectuals.

Maybe Carter is a phony. But, if he is, he is a very artful phony. That breakfast, for instance. It was Carter who chose the dumpy diner. I wanted to break expense-account bread at the Waldorf, but Carter demurred. "Nah," he said. "I don't like those places where they serve you $7 scrambled eggs." He came alone, no staff, no aides, just Jimmy. And, before we met, he asked, "Now, do you know what I look like?" In New York, the lowliest city councilman *assumes* a reporter not only knows what he looks like but has been following his career breathlessly. I'll admit it. Carter snowed me. Maybe he was just acting naturally. And if he was putting me on, the performance was most impressive.

The trouble is, you can't tell about Jimmy Carter. It's one of the things that makes him a little scary to people who think they have the whole world figured out.

But it doesn't seem to bother Jimmy Carter. He jus' keeps keepin' on, smiling, shaking hands, winning primaries, becoming more dangerous every day. Maybe he knows what is out there better than we do. That is reason enough to hate and envy him. ●

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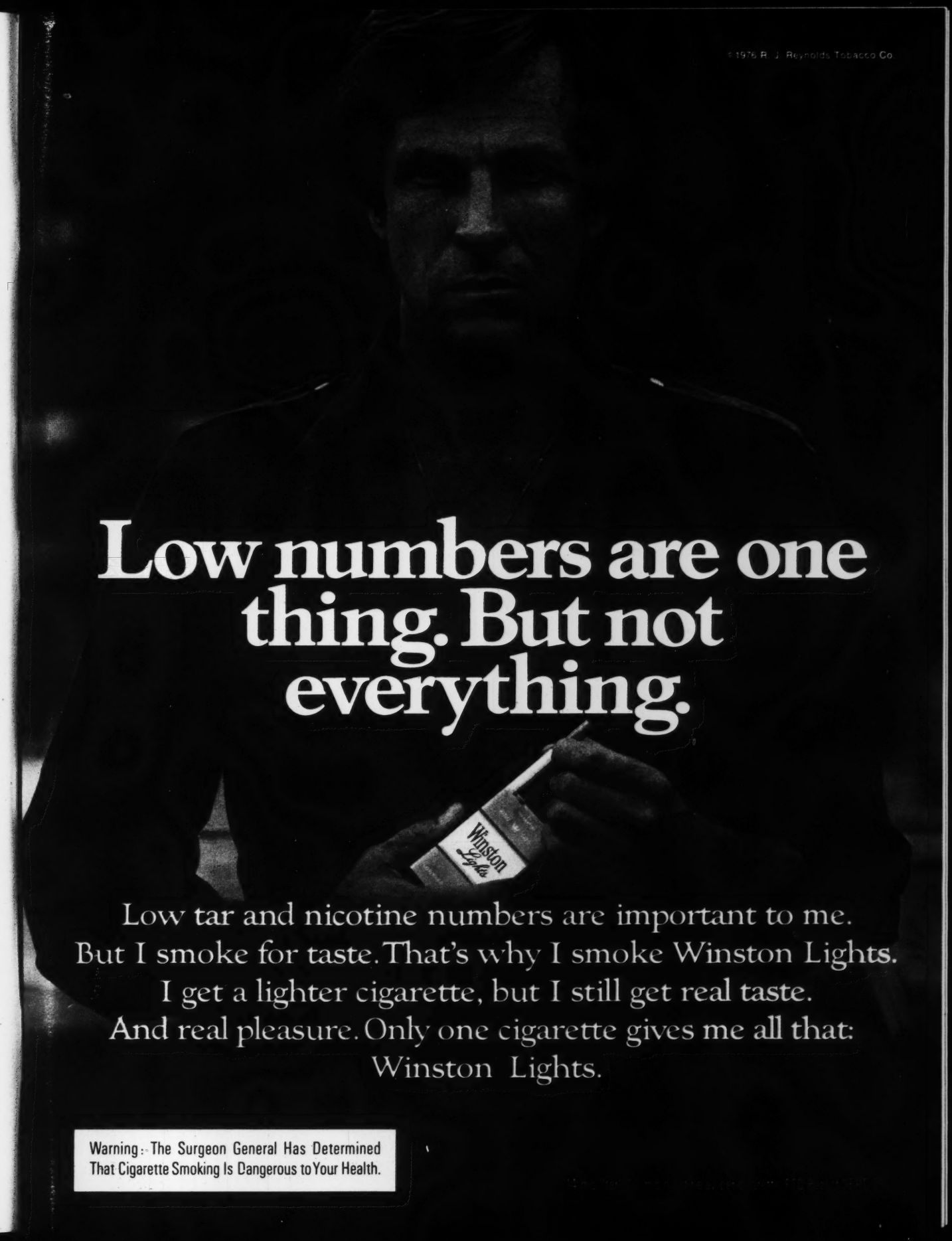

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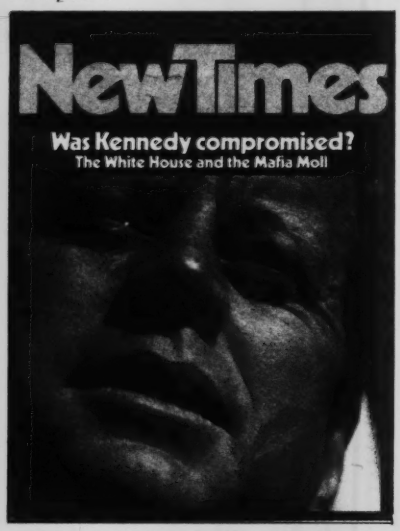

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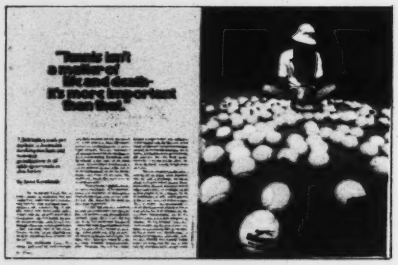
William Safire in the New York Times says we're "the magazine that has an adversary relationship with the world." According to the Washington Post, we're "a new national news magazine of storytellers." To good old Time Magazine, we're "impetuous."

So be it. NEW TIMES makes things happen. We aren't afraid to tell all the truth we can get our hands on. We turn over rocks. We make waves. We yell bloody murder. Troublemakers? You're damn right.

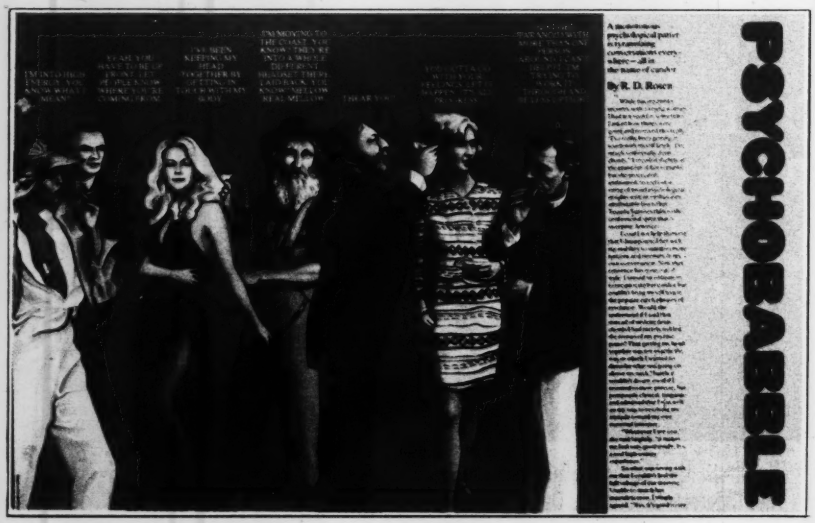
Remember, folks you saw it first . . .

A lot of NEW TIMES stories were firsts. Newsbeats. Scoops. Sure you read about them in other magazines. Afterwards.

We were the first national magazine to reveal the link between the CIA and the Mafia. We were the first to go underground and interview that protean fugitive, Abbie Hoffman. (Among those who wondered how we found him—the FBI.)



The new wave of doubt about the JFK assassination started in NEW TIMES, with stories like the one that showed there had to be several Oswalds. We were the first national magazine to tell the world those little aerosol cans could be the death of us



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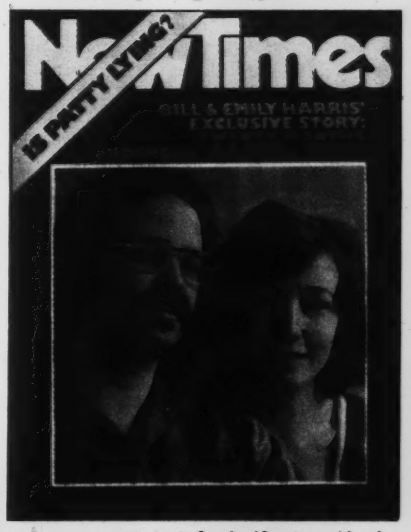

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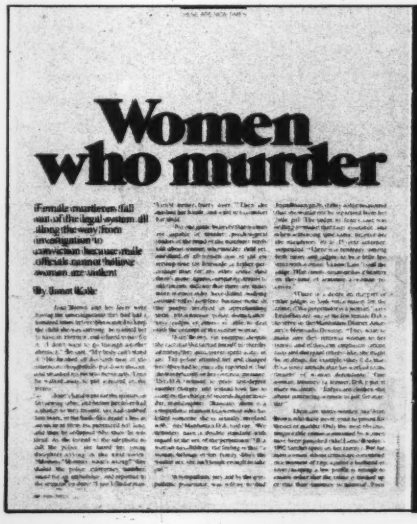

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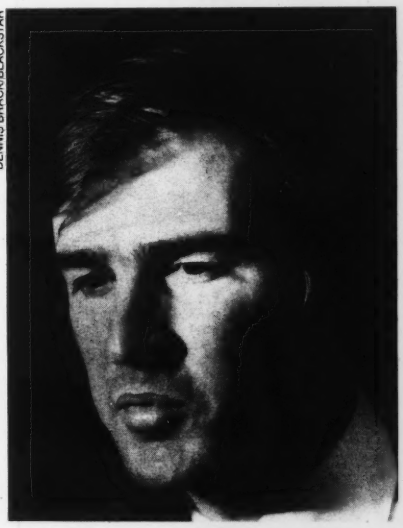
Conservative chic

The Ruling Class

By Robert Scheer

Governor Jerry Brown's announcement as a serious presidential candidate says as much about the vacuousness of Democratic Party politics as it does about the extent of one man's audacity. The 37-year-old California governor has been in office only one year, and although he has managed a favorable press by projecting a fresh post-Watergate image, the rude fact is that he has not yet done anything. His great claim to fame rests on his ability to lower our political expectations while restoring our faith in government—a political ideology that once propelled Dwight Eisenhower to the top. The trick is to exude integrity—Brown's simple '74 Plymouth serves nicely here—and to avoid taking stands on any issue that might cost you a vote. Of course, Brown is no patriotic cornball glad-hander. That wouldn't work in the mid-Seventies. Instead, he wraps himself in the mystique of modern pop religion and spouts a calculated irreverence toward progressive social programs. It's a package that can best be described as conservative chic.

Most press observers notice nothing but Brown's offbeat personal and religious rites, so the governor comes out sounding like an iconoclastic rebel. But, in fact, Brown is driven by traditional political ambitions that happen to be best served these days by hooking up to the voters' mistrust of government. He manages to be all things to all people by suggesting it is government per se that has failed us rather than specific policies and politicians beholden to special interests. Brown talks about lowering voter expectations but not corporate expectations: the lowered expectations deal exclusively with the notion that government has an obligation to eliminate poverty, racial discrimination and unemployment. The assumption here is that because the phony token Great Society programs of the Johnson Administration failed, one should no longer expect social progress through government action. Which means little more than the old conservative idea of leaving it up to private corporations to solve the very problems they have created. But Lyndon Johnson's programs were destined to fail, because they aimed only at marginal changes in society. What has not been tested is any serious program for transferring corporate power into the hands of the citizenry, which is precisely the alternative obscured by Brown's talk of lowered expectations.



DENNIS BRACK/BLACKSTAR

The current public disillusionment with government arises from the failure of specific policies the public never asked for in the first place, like the undeclared war in Vietnam. But instead of dealing with the sources of public discontent—the power arrangement that runs this country—Brown focuses on the symptoms of public malaise.

I recently spent three months with Brown for an extensive interview that runs in the current issue of *Playboy*. One exchange in that interview illustrates my point. The governor blamed the "negative energy" of the press for the loss of public respect for our institutions. When I asked him, as a case in point, if the press shouldn't have reported the abuses of the CIA and FBI, his response was: "I have very mixed feelings. There've been abuses; these agencies have gotten out of control and have to be brought back into control. But in the process we may end up throwing out the baby with the bathwater." If one needs to be a Zen meditator to get to that sort of contorted apologia, I'd rather have a Presbyterian as president.

In the course of our discussion, Brown revealed a deep-grained conservatism and even a jingoism that the press has not associated with his youthful liberal image. His only criticism of Attica was that Rockefeller hadn't moved fast enough in crushing the prisoners' rebellion. On foreign policy, he shares Daniel Moynihan's position that the poor countries are responsible for the problems of the world: "Well, I get the impression that we're being pushed around a lot and that America has become a big sap for the rest of the countries. And I don't like it. We have a lot of strength, so I don't see why we should have guilt feelings and act like we're always the fall guys."

Brown's great claim to liberalism depends on the one legislative achievement of his administration: the farm labor law. This permitted a large number of farmworkers' elections in California, most of them won by Cesar Chavez' union. But not one single contract has been signed in California as a result of those elections, and the administrative unit charged with producing those contracts is now out of business for lack of funds. It is typical of his political style that he seeks to keep the Teamsters and Chavez and the growers all on his side. Is this the new honesty that he has promised to bring to American politics? If Brown were challenged on all this he could emerge as a far more useful politician, but the media has fallen for the hoopla of his California freakiness, Zen meditation and youthful brazenness, all of which have about as much to do with what makes Jerry run as Nixon's Quaker mother had to do with Watergate. ●

The omnipotent press

Fulminations

By Larry L. King

When Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp bowed out of the presidential chase, becoming the fourth fatality in as many weeks, he said: "The [press] coverage of me was putrid. The press in this country is just not interested at all in a candidate who wants seriously to raise important issues and problems. All the press wants is one candidate's reaction to another candidate's statement."

This the *New York Times* interpreted as a sign of "bitterness." To me, however, the governor's comment indicated nothing more than that he had been reading the newspapers, watching the boob tube and perfectly understood what he saw.

Congressman Mo Udall got up early to appear on the *Today* show; about all they asked him was what he thought of his opponents' strategies and chances. Later, on *Issues and Answers,* his interrogators seemed preoccupied with why this person or that organization had not yet hugged his political neck. Udall, as do other hopefuls, has a program to advocate and certain strong convictions. He's finding that trying to talk about them is almost as difficult as pole-vaulting with a toothpick.

You have read reams on Jimmy Carter's sunny grin and on his unflagging handshaking abilities, but what do you *really* know of what he thinks on vital issues? Very little, I suspect, even though it is increasingly possible he may be grappling with very real problems in the White House less than a year from now. "When newsmen ask a question," the late Robert Kennedy once said, "the candidate must learn to satisfy it quickly and leap into his discussion of the issues without pausing for breath."

Not only Governor Shapp but also Terry Sanford, Sargent Shriver, Fred Harris, Mo Udall and Jimmy Carter were considered such ho-hum, long-shot candidates that the press originally paid them less attention than it might shower on a bake-off contest winner. Carter finally got attention as an oddity: a son of Dixie who looked a little Kennedyish, failed to shout racial vituperatives and might even select the right salad fork. The others, however, were consigned to back-page positions over near the truss ads.

This isn't to say that the press can, or should, make gee-whiz contenders of pretenders who possibly shouldn't have let their ambitions run away with them to begin with. Repeated prophecies, however, that Zilch is a minor candidate or that Pilch can't win become self-fulfilling. Money sources dry up while Pilch and Zilch

ILLUSTRATION BY JERRY ZIMMERMAN

campaign almost in secret. Finally they stand long-faced in front of microphones to announce the end of their dreams. Then the inquiring press, which hasn't told us a thimbleful about them to date, asks the penetrating question, "How come you didn't do no better?" Only then do poor old Zilch and Pilch see their respective names blinking from front pages.

The astonishing thing is that the omnipotent press continues to contribute certain shapings—if largely negative—to public political attitudes even in the face of having compiled absolutely dismal percentages in the soothsaying department. Perhaps, back when national conventions were brokered in smoke-filled rooms, the press more often than not guessed correctly: even a blind hog will stumble on an occasional acorn. As presidential primaries increasingly produce our nominees, however, the press makes more glaring errors than a rookie Class-D shortstop.

In 1964, they told us Rocky would soon smash Barry Goldwater's loud little band. In 1968, Michigan's George Romney was a shoo-in for the GOP nomination. In 1972, Ed Muskie was the new Lincoln. The early wisdom this year was that Birch Bayh had the liberal banner safely captured; only six weeks ago columnists and commentators warned President Bumble he was certain to take his lumps from Ronnie Boy Reagan. For those paying only scant attention to recent events, be reminded that Senator Bayh now is free to raise hogs or corn and Ronnie Boy soon may be renewing his actors' guild card.

More and more the "news" feeds on itself. ZILCH CAN'T WIN, the headlines cry and cry and cry. Cabbies and merchant princes repeat it. The polls then show it to be true. Television news, especially, is increasingly a mock show with candidates staging "media events"—gobbling bagels and lox in Bensonhurst or chewing watermelon on the safer fringes of Harlem—because they know that their "white papers" or even their half-sensible speeches will be ignored as bad theater. Syndicated columnists read each other, scratch their clubby chins and, given certain windage allowances according to their respective ideological biases, reach the same pack-journalism conclusions: Muskie's got it and gone with it, Rocky lives, Humphrey will swoop in from the wings to claim center stage.

The next time such solemn "experts" assure you that Zilch or Pilch cannot be taken seriously, remember the same thing should apply to those same experts. Above all, remember you read it here first. ●

Wily ways the government wastes our money;
Another senator and his transplants

EDITED BY
TONY SCHWARTZ

The Insider

Politics

Pulling a job

Joan Braden isn't the only one behind whom Henry Kissinger has put his considerable influence. Sworn government affidavits show that the Secretary of State also pulled out the stops four years ago to get his future brother-in-law, David R. Maginnes, hired by the Office of Education.

The affidavits were taken during a recent Civil Service investigation of alleged influence peddling in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's personnel office. In violation of government regulations, Maginnes' application was treated as a "must hire . . . future brother-in-law of Henry Kissinger." Accordingly, Maginnes was given a job in 1972, and continues to work today as an "education program specialist" at $20,032 a year.

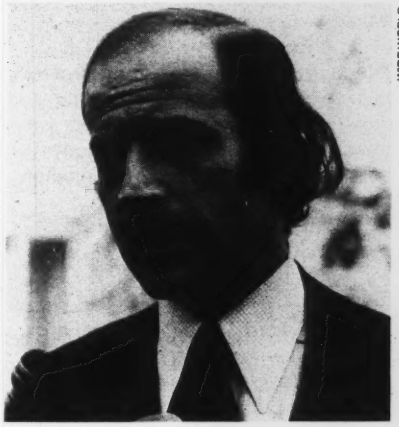
Maginnes denies he got his job through political pull. "My credentials were impeccable," he says. "I will have you know that I am a Yale graduate with honors. I have a Ph.D. in history from Columbia University, five European languages and a decade of university teaching." None of which changes the fact that three HEW officials testified they felt their jobs would be in jeopardy unless they hired Nancy Kissinger's brother.

STEVEN STONE

Kissinger: throwing his weight around

A hair-raising story

When Senator William Proxmire (D-Wisc.) began receiving hair transplants in 1972, the proliferation of plugs on his head—and the vanity they implied—made him the butt of endless one-liners. Thus, when a balding fellow senator decided he too wanted hair again, he knew better than to take his pate public. Instead, 33-year-old Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del.) made discreet inquiries and then contacted transplant expert Dr. Ronald Cameron of Bethesda, Maryland—who does an average of 50 to 70 plugs a session at $15 each. To avoid being discovered, the senator has been undergoing the painful treatments much more slowly than his colleague Proxmire. Although Biden's administrative assistant refused to comment on the transplants, Dr. Cameron's office inadvertently let it slip to *New Times* that the young legislator's sister makes his appointments—under an alias. Biden has been receiving the costly treatment regularly for the past few months and his vanity is understandable: he is the Senate's youngest member, and until three years ago he had a nearly full head of hair.



WIDE WORLD

Biden: staying young

Is the government wasting away?

Nothing more predictably elicits outrage these days than tales of government waste. Gone is Vietnam, buried is Watergate, but the issue of how taxpayer money is spent lives on. Lest the collective outrage be spread too thinly, we asked Correspondent Ernie Lendler to gather the best of the worst examples:

- $2,696,561 in contracts during the first six weeks of 1976 for the construction of three tennis courts, two swimming pools and two bowling alleys at various military bases.
- $5,000,000, approximately, to provide 500 servants to generals and admirals for one year. Good news is on the horizon here, though. Last year the Pentagon requested $1.1 million for a study to find alternatives to the use of military servants.
- $2,267,420 for a five-month order of liquor and a six-month order of beer and wine by the Procurement Division, Fort Hood, Texas. Listed in government document under "Subsistence."
- $342,000 for research on whether college students have premarital sex.
- $470,000 to run the Federal

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON

Fire Council for six years. In that period, it met less than three times and thoroughly stymied investigators who tried to determine its function.

●$300,000 to keep two Air Force fishing camps near King Salmon, Alaska, open for 45 days. Total traffic during 1974: 804 persons.

●$113,417 for a study to determine why "mothers" prefer no-iron clothing.

●$80,000 for a study to measure how marijuana and alcohol affect one's ability to recognize smiles, frowns and other facial expressions.

●$363,000 for a study to discover whether smoking marijuana makes it easier for a person to be hypnotized.

●$121,000 to study the effects of marijuana on sexual response. Southern Illinois University students were paid $10 to $20 a day to smoke marijuana while watching porno films.

●$431,000 in five grants to one professor. He studied the conditions under which rats, monkeys and humans bite and clench their jaws. One significant finding was that drunk monkeys clench more slowly and less frequently than sober monkeys.

●$2,680,470 to build a special military band and chorus training center at Fort Myer, Virginia.

●$191,400 by the U.S. Navy on Frisbees reading "Sailors Have More Fun," each disk picturing a mermaid.

●$40,000 for a "research study oriented toward identifying and assessing the basic causes for the high cost of submarines."

●$100,000 to mail discount stamps on the purchase of a dozen condoms to 43,000 "sexually active" boys in selected cities. Only 254 coupons were redeemed.

●$98,000 awarded by the Selective Service System to its former chief public relations officer shortly after the switch to an all-volunteer army. The officer's mission: to study the all-volunteer army concept in other countries.

Now we promise to let the government waste in peace for a while.

Word games people play

"It's only a word," said President Ford recently, in announcing his intention to banish *détente* from the American vocabulary but not to banish the policy itself. Instead, it will henceforth be referred to as "peace through strength," a phrase ripe with positive connotations. Contributing Writer Paul Slansky suggests that Ford has hit upon an ingenious way for politicians to semantically defuse even the most volatile issues of the day.

Inflation is often cited as the most serious problem facing the nation today. On closer inspection, the word is actually just technical jargon for "the process by which goods and services increase in monetary value, with no expenditure of effort required on the part of the citizenry." If the television that you bought for $500 last year costs $600 today, aren't you $100 ahead of the game?

Similar misconceptions plague the *unemployment* situation. Wouldn't it be wiser to stop dwelling on its less pleasant side effects, such as lack of income and social stigma, and focus instead on its salutary qualities? Who are the *unemployed*, after all, but "those with extra time to devote to leisure activities"?

Surely no word cries out for replacement as desperately as *abortion*. Admittedly, "premature stillbirth" leaves something to be desired, though it does at least blur the extremely touchy murder question which Right-to-Lifers so eagerly

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exploit. Likewise, the cause of intelligent debate can only be furthered by the retirement of that emotionally charged label, *busing,* and a shift to "the unified education-travel experience."

Richard Nixon, or better yet, "the 37th President," was not so much *pardoned* as "put behind us." The CIA, currently in such bad odor, does not engage in *covert intelligence-gathering operations;* rather, it "seeks knowledge without calling undue attention to itself." And the *Pentagon,* fraught with such negative bureaucratic and militaristic overtones, could quickly rehabilitate itself by adopting the more antiseptic appellation, "building with five sides."

Seventies

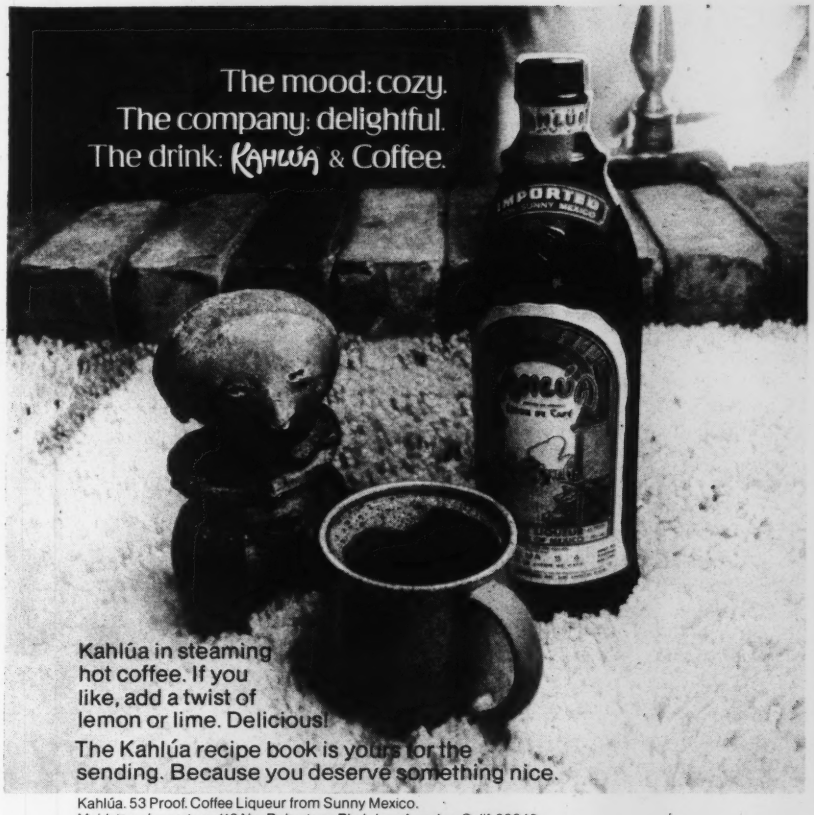
Bringing the city to the country

The urban fiscal crisis of the Seventies may be a forerunner of a similar rural crisis in the 1980s. The reason is that disillusioned young people who are fleeing the hassles of city life spawn a new set of problems when they settle in the country.

Iowa State University landscape architect Thomas A. Barton has noted that many back-to-the-landers bring with them urban expectations. Though their demands may seem legitimate, limited local government often cannot meet them. "They scream about the conditions of the country roads, the county has to plow them out in snowstorms and they expect the school bus to go down the smallest dirt lanes," explains Barton. "They also want their kids to have good schools and swimming pools." Meanwhile, farmers are complaining about reduced cropland, polluted streams and generally less tranquil lives that result from the influx of new people. The danger for the 1980s, says Barton, is local bankruptcy or substantial new taxes in many small towns.

Teacher's threat

The school violence we've been hearing so much about recently is not confined to major cities. Seventy-five percent of all school districts, for instance, now employ police at school dances. In House Springs, Missouri—a rural, lily-white school district—10 youths overdosed on drugs last year. During one two-month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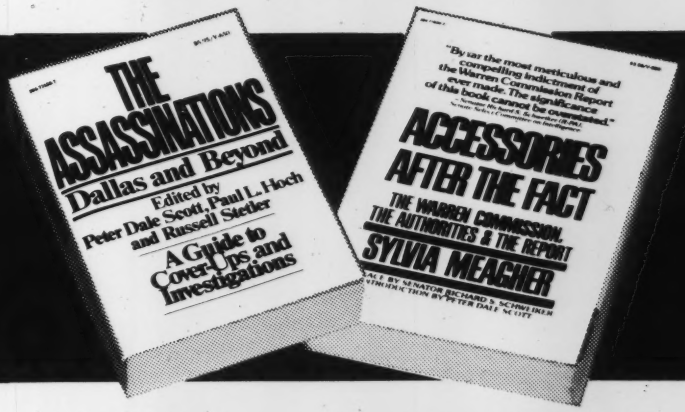
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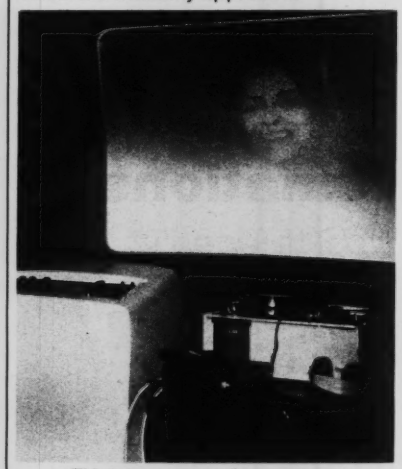
period there, $6,000 in equipment was stolen, rifle bullets were found in teachers' cars and one teacher was stabbed by a female student.

Things have gotten so rough in classrooms that one California psychiatrist concludes teachers are showing signs of "battle fatigue" brought on by "the combination of continued violence and threats of violence with little or no support from school administrators." The Ohio Federation of Teachers is one group that has found a novel way to fight back: they are sponsoring legislation that would grant "assault leave" to teachers injured in the line of duty.

Seeing is believing

Like waterbeds, computer dating sounded better than it felt. A scientific match might have seemed intriguing at first, but in the end you met strangers you knew virtually nothing about. That's precisely what makes the advent of video dating services such an interesting advance. Those who join services are generally interviewed on closed-circuit television, and the resulting tapes are placed in a catalogue available for viewing. All dates are mutually approved.



TV dates: screening partners

It certainly seemed as promising as most chance social encounters, and so we asked correspondent Jim Barahal to check out one service. He chose Teledate, Inc., a new organization which makes its tapes in color and is the only one now available to gays as well as heterosexuals. Said Barahal:

"The atmosphere was surprisingly relaxed. The office is a small, elegant apartment and when you arrive they serve refreshments, give you a short questionnaire to fill out and talk with you informally. After you feel comfortable, you do a three- or four-minute tape with an interviewer. It's more conversational than rapid-fire question and answer.

"When it's over, they take a Polaroid shot of you, and from then on you are free to return, peruse the catalogue of pictures and see any tapes you want. For $30 a month or $75 for three months, you are permitted to see any number of tapes, and money is refunded if you don't get at least one date. It takes a while to get used to the idea, but after you do it has an odd appeal. I'm even thinking of trying it."

Sneaker sole

Some months ago we described a revolution that had turned once-simple canvas sneakers into fashionable, multi-colored prestige items. Indeed, the costly new sneakers even merited a fancy new name: athletic footwear.

Now some clever entrepreneurs, realizing that some people who buy expensive sneakers can't afford to replace them at will, have developed an alternative. Tred 2, a California company, will take a costly worn-out pair and give them a complete overhaul—new soles, insoles, arches, even a new color. In only its third year of operation, Tred 2 expects to recondition 250,000 pairs of sneakers this year, and at $11.95 a pair, most people figure they're getting a bargain. No matter that a solid pair of new Keds are available for less—the key is the savings against a $25 pair of Adidas. "We cater to the avid athlete who is likely to be more finicky about his tennis shoes," says Tred 2 vice-president Pat Connolly. "If you can still lace 'em, we can fix 'em."

Now how about a company that patches those frayed warm-up suits?

ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK CALKINS

Mind & Body

Bagging it

It's most likely to be found at parties of hospital workers, where people are passing plastic bags rather than joints. Halothane is a potent anesthetic gas used to put preoperative patients to sleep. But, if used for only a few seconds, it yields an intense pleasurable sensation instead.

The halothane high has been the subject of recent articles in a number of medical magazines, but no one knows how widespread abuse of the drug has become—or exactly how dangerous it can be. Too much of the gas can congest the lungs or stop the heart. And already there has been one report of an accidental death.

Rating medical schools

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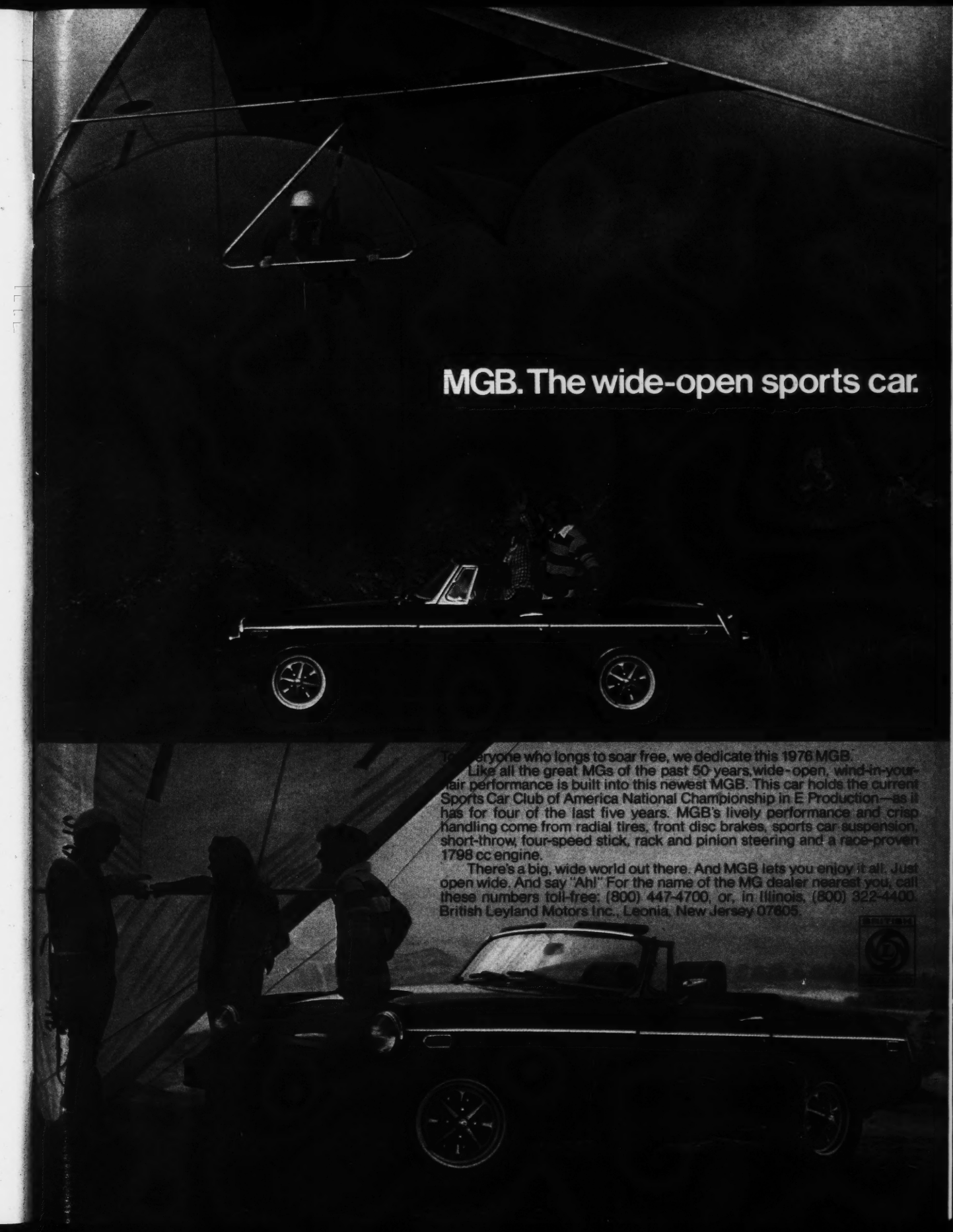
Meanwhile the struggle to get into *any* medical school remains fierce. Figures show that two out of every three applicants are rejected nationwide and that despite the recruitment of minorities, it still pays to be a wealthy applicant. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, half of all current medical students come from families with incomes over $20,000 and only 17 percent from families with incomes under $10,000. Perhaps the best advantage, though, is to have a physician for a father—one in every seven medical students do.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BRITISH

period there, $6,000 in equipment was stolen, rifle bullets were found in teachers' cars and one teacher was stabbed by a female student.

Things have gotten so rough in classrooms that one California psychiatrist concludes teachers are showing signs of "battle fatigue" brought on by "the combination of continued violence and threats of violence with little or no support from school administrators." The Ohio Federation of Teachers is one group that has found a novel way to fight back: they are sponsoring legislation that would grant "assault leave" to teachers injured in the line of duty.

Seeing is believing

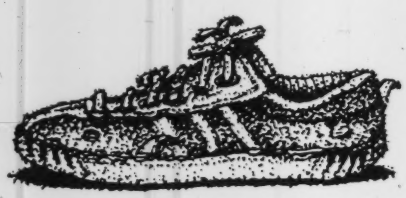
Like waterbeds, computer dating sounded better than it felt. A scientific match might have seemed intriguing at first, but in the end you met strangers you knew virtually nothing about. That's precisely what makes the advent of video dating services such an interesting advance. Those who join services are generally interviewed on closed-circuit television, and the resulting tapes are placed in a catalogue available for viewing. All dates are mutually approved.

TV dates: screening partners

It certainly seemed as promising as most chance social encounters, and so we asked correspondent Jim Barahal to check out one service. He chose Teledate, Inc., a new organization which makes its tapes in color and is the only one now available to gays as well as heterosexuals. Said Barahal:

"The atmosphere was surprisingly relaxed. The office is a small, elegant apartment and when you arrive they serve refreshments, give you a short questionnaire to fill out and talk with you informally. After you feel comfortable, you do a three- or four-minute tape with an interviewer. It's more conversational than rapid-fire question and answer.

"When it's over, they take a Polaroid shot of you, and from then on you are free to return, peruse the catalogue of pictures and see any tapes you want. For $30 a month or $75 for three months, you are permitted to see any number of tapes, and money is refunded if you don't get at least one date. It takes a while to get used to the idea, but after you do it has an odd appeal. I'm even thinking of trying it."



Sneaker sole

Some months ago we described a revolution that had turned once-simple canvas sneakers into fashionable, multi-colored prestige items. Indeed, the costly new sneakers even merited a fancy new name: athletic footwear.

Now some clever entrepreneurs, realizing that some people who buy expensive sneakers can't afford to replace them at will, have developed an alternative. Tred 2, a California company, will take a costly worn-out pair and give them a complete overhaul—new soles, insoles, arches, even a new color. In only its third year of operation, Tred 2 expects to recondition 250,000 pairs of sneakers this year, and at $11.95 a pair, most people figure they're getting a bargain. No matter that a solid pair of new Keds are available for less—the key is the savings against a $25 pair of Adidas. "We cater to the avid athlete who is likely to be more finicky about his tennis shoes," says Tred 2 vice-president Pat Connolly. "If you can still lace 'em, we can fix 'em."

Now how about a company that patches those frayed warm-up suits?

ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK CALKINS

Mind & Body

Bagging it

It's most likely to be found at parties of hospital workers, where people are passing plastic bags rather than joints. Halothane is a potent anesthetic gas used to put preoperative patients to sleep. But, if used for only a few seconds, it yields an intense pleasurable sensation instead.

The halothane high has been the subject of recent articles in a number of medical magazines, but no one knows how widespread abuse of the drug has become—or exactly how dangerous it can be. Too much of the gas can congest the lungs or stop the heart. And already there has been one report of an accidental death.

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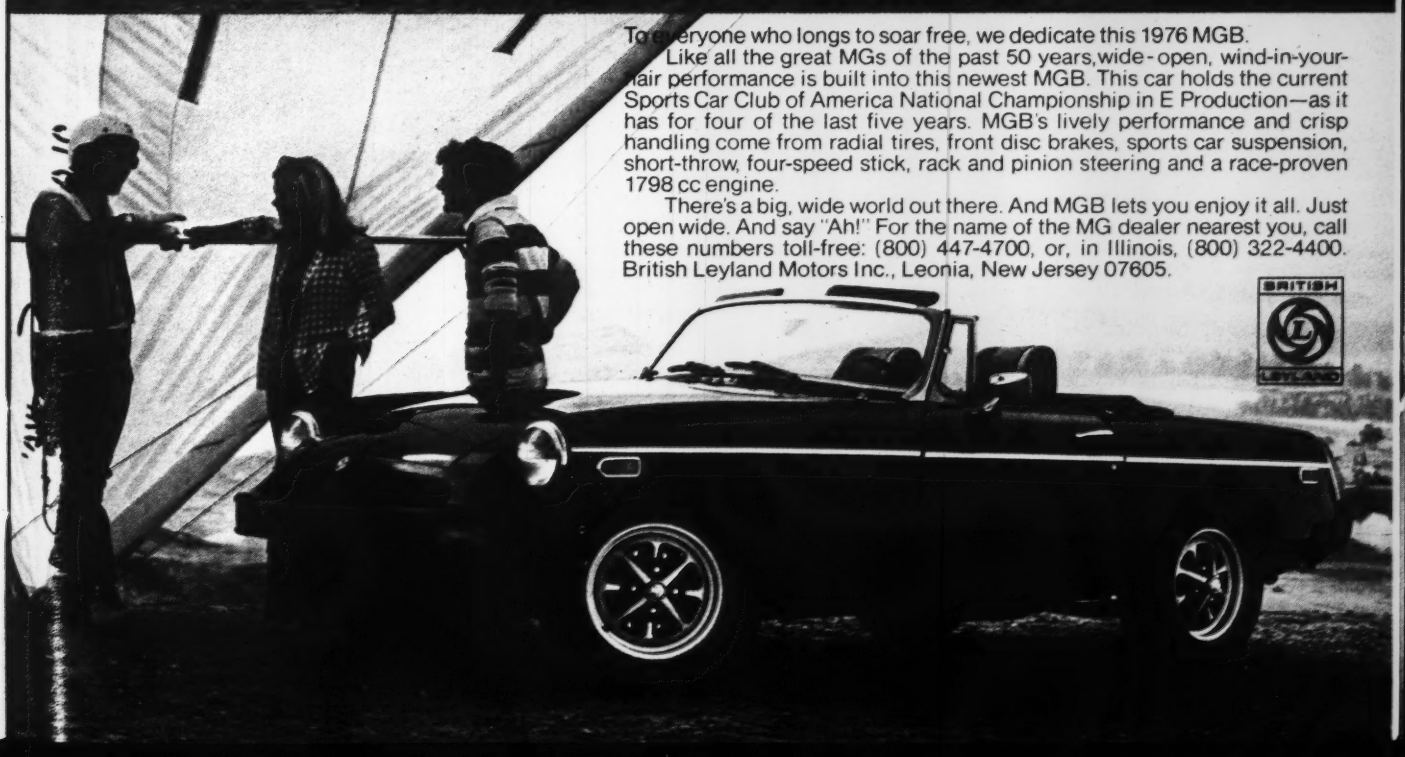


PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PHILLIPS

A military mystery story

DESKTOP

Are there nuclear missiles hidden at the bottom of the ocean? What was the real mission of the *Glomar Explorer*? Did we ever get the full story of the Pentagon's White House spy ring? A top secret Navy project code-named DESKTOP evokes some of the Seventies' elusive enigmas

By Michael Drosnin

Yeoman 1st Class Charles E. Radford turned sheet white and his hands began to tremble, the tremor advancing uncontrollably until it shook his entire tall, thin frame. He buried his face in his hands, quietly repeated the code word "DESKTOP" and shook his head slowly. "You can't know about that," he said, looking up. "Nobody knows about *that*. That's the biggest national security secret there is."

We were alone in a clerical office aboard the *USS Hector*, a repair ship docked at the Mare Island Naval Station in Vallejo, California. Radford works there. He is just a uniformed clerk. But the 32-year-old seaman has not always had such a drab assignment, and when he speaks of national security secrets, he speaks from experience. Once he had been an admiral's writer, had worked in the Pentagon and the White House, had kept the files for the liaison between the National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had access to the most sensitive documents flowing between this country's highest-level civilian strategists and its top military leaders, had even traveled around the world with Henry Kissinger.

All that came to a sudden end four years ago. In December 1971, Nixon's special investigative squad, called the Plumbers, uncovered a military spy ring inside the White House. Radford was named as its chief operative. He confessed under grueling interrogation that he had been systematically ransacking classified National Security Council files, turning over copies of the pilfered documents to his Pentagon superiors. He also admitted rifling "burn bags" and briefcases while on overseas missions with Kissinger and his then deputy, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. Among the hundreds of sensitive papers he obtained were "eyes only" messages to the President concerning secret peace talks with the North Vietnamese, secret nuclear disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union and Kissinger's secret July 1971 trip to China.

The Plumbers' startling discovery was suppressed. Radford was quietly transferred out to the boondocks—a small Naval Reserve station in Salem, Oregon—where he remained until January 1974, when the military spy ring finally jumped into the headlines during the height of the Watergate crisis. Summoned to Washington, the young seaman was hauled before the Senate Armed Services Committee, made the scapegoat for the Joint Chiefs' espionage and denounced by the very military leaders who had ordered him to become a double agent. And then he slipped back into obscurity.

But now, aboard the *Hector*, Radford was afraid the nightmare was about to engulf him again. "It's going to be the same thing all over," he sighed. "They'll find out you've been here. This is going to be even worse than last time." I had come to see Yeoman Radford about a meeting he apparently attended in early 1971 and about the subject of that meeting—a mysterious military program code-named DESKTOP. "Nobody ever mentioned that meeting before, not even when I was going through interrogations," he said. "You're the first to ask."

"I'll talk about the military spying if you want," Radford continued. "I'll talk about Project Jennifer. But I can't talk about DESKTOP."

What is DESKTOP? Four months after my first meeting with Radford, I'm still not sure I have the answer. There is,

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PHILLIPS

or was, a covert military program called DESKTOP, conducted at the highest level of classification, known only to a small group of ranking officials. That much the Defense Department finally confirmed. Beyond that, only one thing is clear: the yeoman is not alone in being scared by the question.

All the rest of the evidence is contradictory. Secret weapons systems, clandestine intelligence operations, foreign intrigue, domestic espionage. Official denials, unconfirmed allegations, hints of a dangerous cabal. A frightened yeoman, a bewildered scientist, a silenced admiral. In the end, no certain answers—just an odd but compelling string of leads.

It all began with a disgruntled CIA agent. We were talking about Project Jennifer, and he suggested I take a closer look at the *Glomar Explorer*, the CIA-Howard Hughes mystery ship that reportedly raised part of a sunken Russian submarine from the bottom of the Pacific. "I wasn't directly involved . . . ," the agent began hesitantly, "but I've heard that the *Glomar* wasn't just plucking things out of the ocean." Although we were alone in his Washington apartment, he lowered his voice before going on. "I've been told its primary mission was to put things in." What things? "Missiles."

Missiles under the sea. I was skeptical. The agent's information was third-hand, and he had no details. But several mysteries about the *Glomar* had never been satisfactorily explained. Why invest over $550 million in an incredibly sophisticated vessel only to have it dredge up an obsolete 1958 model diesel-powered Soviet sub? Why had the money come from the Navy's Research, Development, Test and Evaluation funds, rather than from the CIA? And what had motivated CIA Director Colby to volunteer so much information to so many reporters while ostensibly trying to kill the sub-raising story? Did his Br'er Rabbit briar patch routine mask a bigger secret? If the *Glomar* could reach three miles underwater to fetch a submarine, perhaps it could also install nuclear weapons on the ocean floor, and do it clandestinely.

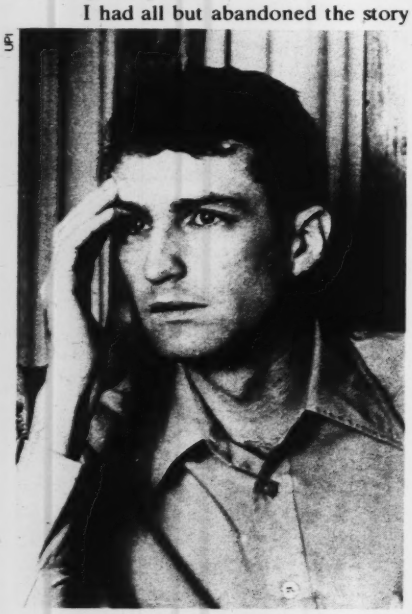
Military exploitation of the seabed is not a Jules Verne fantasy. The world's oceans are already bugged, mined and might soon be occupied. A vast array of undersea listening devices line the ocean bottom, and it was, in fact, this sonar network that pinpointed the sunken sub's resting place for the *Glomar*. Experimental military bases have been built in shallow water off the California and Florida coasts, and the Navy is now developing plans for deep-sea manned stations burrowed under the ocean subsoil.

Undersea warfare experts readily agreed that nuclear missiles could also be hidden beneath the waves. "Silos could be drilled into the seabed, launch platforms could be built on the bottom, the missiles could be submerged in barges, or even encased in cannisters capable of surfacing and firing on command," explained MIT Professor Kosta Tsipis, a leading authority in the field. If secretly deployed, the missiles would be virtually invulnerable. Spy satellites could not see them, enemy strategists could not target them and, even if discovered, only a direct hit with a high-yield warhead could knock them out.

The agent whispered: "I've been told the *Glomar*'s primary mission was to put things in the ocean. Missiles"

But while technologically feasible and strategically attractive, such a system would also be illegal. A 1971 treaty bans nuclear weapons on the ocean floor. If the Seabed Treaty had been violated, I could find no one to admit it. If the requisite billions had been appropriated, the defense budgets did not show it. And if the *Glomar* had indeed been planting missiles, the evidence had been quite effectively "deep-sixed."

I had all but abandoned the story when a Pentagon source I had contacted earlier called back with a long-shot lead. "There's an ex-Navy scientist who's suing the government," he said. "It seems he was fired from a top secret project, and I think it involved undersea stuff. There's not much more I can tell you, I don't even know his name, but he's got a radical lawyer, that guy who represented Ellsberg. Weinberg."



Yeoman Radford: he feared the nightmare would engulf him again.

Actually, it was Leonard Weinglass, a Los Angeles attorney who had also defended the Chicago 7 and is now representing Bill and Emily Harris in the SLA case. He was not eager to talk about his mystery client. "I've been sitting on that for six months," he said. "I won't give you his name, and I really know very little about his case. Anyway, it has nothing to do with the *Glomar.*"

He paused, then added, "But you may be right about the missiles."

Weinglass would go no further. He was adamant. I badgered him for a week, arguing his moral obligation to expose a major treaty violation, a dangerous escalation of the arms race, a hidden threat to world peace. He finally relented, agreeing to talk off the record. (He has since given me permission to quote him.)

"Some old guy just walked into my office one day and told me this incredible story," Weinglass recalled. "He said he had been working for the Navy on some kind of an underwater ABM system. Not necessarily missiles. It may be an electronic shield. He definitely said it was in some way connected with satellites. He wouldn't tell me much about it. He said it was very highly classified, and if it ever became known the balance of power would shift in the world. But in early 1972 he was fired. He stumbled onto that operation DESKTOP, and as a result they terminated him."

"What is DESKTOP?" I interrupted. It was the first time I had heard the code word. "Oh, that whole Radford-Kissinger military spying thing," Weinglass replied matter-of-factly.

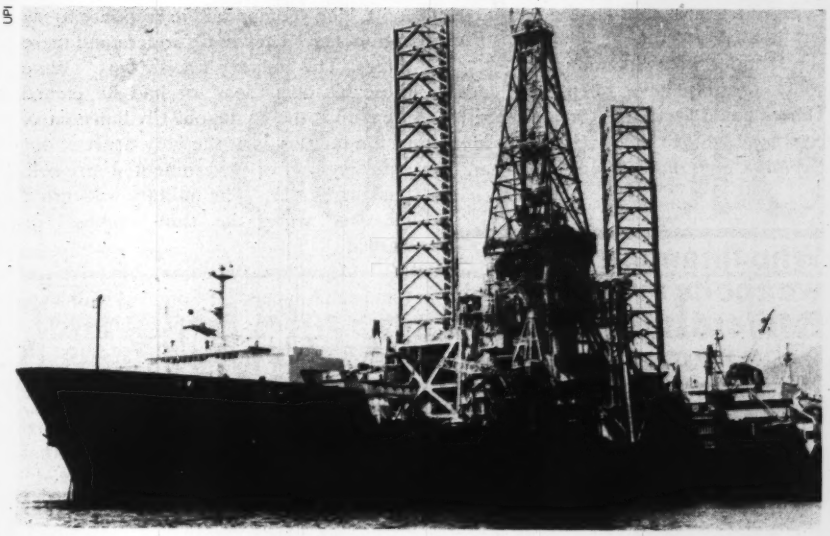
"Somehow it came up at a meeting the scientist had with Radford and an Admiral Robinson. Robinson, you know, was one of the guys involved in the spy ring. Apparently, it was quite a stormy meeting. This all happened right before the Watergate break-in, and the scientist is convinced there's a connection. After the meeting, he called a couple of senators. Democrats. Nixon was keeping the military spy thing a secret then, and here's this guy who knows about DESKTOP and the ABM, and he's talking to the Democrats. Naval Intelligence questioned him about it. And this was right before the Watergate break-in.

"All the guy wanted me to do was call the government and say I was representing him," Weinglass concluded. "He said that would scare them. And it must have, because before that they had offered $30,000 to settle his suit, and now it's up to a quarter million."

I tried once more for the scientist's name. "I can't tell you that," Weinglass said. "I've already told you more than I should have. He said if his name ever got out his life might be in danger."

A secret undersea ABM system. A scientist who had worked on it fired because he found out about DESKTOP. And who was now afraid he'd be killed. A final solution to the Watergate mystery. If this bizarre tale were true, it was not just another story.

An ABM would be even more frightening than hidden offensive missiles. This country already had the power to destroy the world. If we also had the ability to defend ourselves, the nuclear stalemate would be broken. The United States could launch a first-strike attack. I had to find that scientist.



UPI

Howard Hughes' mysterious *Glomar Explorer:* was the Russian sub caper just a cover for its real job—putting weapons on the ocean floor?

The key seemed to be his meeting with Robinson and Radford. I checked back issues of the *New York Times* for every story published about the military spy ring. The word "DESKTOP" never appeared. That was disturbing, and so was the news about Rear Admiral Rembrandt C. Robinson. He was dead. Just five months after the Plumbers uncovered his key role in the scandal, Robinson had been killed in a helicopter crash, the highest ranking U.S. officer to die in Vietnam. That left only the man Robinson had ordered to pilfer White House documents—Yeoman Charles E. Radford.

I decided to hit him cold. Radford had no reason to cooperate and every reason to avoid the press. All his troubles began when he was accused of leaking classified position papers on the India-Pakistan war to columnist Jack Anderson. It was while investigating those leaks that the Plumbers had discovered the spy ring.

The last address I had for the yeoman was a Naval Reserve station in Salem, Oregon. Radford had been reassigned, and no one there wanted to talk about him. Finally an enlisted man agreed to play a guessing game. Is he still on the West Coast? Yes. California? Right again. San Diego? No, try going north. Sacramento? You went too far. San Francisco? More or less. That was as far as he would go. There were two Navy bases in the general area. Seventeen phone calls later I located Radford aboard the *USS Hector.* He was on 24-hour duty and could not leave the ship, but reluctantly agreed to see me that evening when he would be alone.

"Do you recall a meeting you attended in Washington with Admiral Robinson and a high-level Navy scientist?" I asked as soon as we were seated in the ship's clerical office. Radford was clearly taken aback. "What was the meeting about?" he inquired nervously. "DESKTOP," I replied. The blood slowly drained from the yeoman's thin face; I thought he was going to faint. There was a long silence. Finally Radford, still shaking, said, "That's the biggest national security secret there is." Obviously he knew a lot more about DESKTOP than I did. I just nodded gravely, hoping he would at least reveal the scientist's name before regaining his composure.

"You're not going to write a story about this, are you? You can't," Radford implored. "Other countries, other governments, the fate of so many nations are involved. You don't understand how sensitive this is." Tell me, I suggested. "I can't," he replied. "I was under very strict instructions *never* to speak about that program."

"I'll talk about the military spying if you want," Radford offered. "That's already public." Not completely, I guessed. "No," he conceded. "There's a great deal about the military spying that never came out. No one ever asked the right questions, thank God." About its connection to DESKTOP, for example? "It was involved." How? "I can't talk about DESKTOP," the yeoman reiterated. He was resolute.

Then let's talk about the meeting, I said. It was quite stormy, wasn't it? "Yes, it certainly was," Radford agreed. "Admiral Robinson had quite a temper. He didn't normally lose it, but he did this time." What was the argument about? "Oh, the scientist was being held down. He found himself in a peculiar situation—he had information he was not supposed to. He had professional concerns, and Robinson had ideological or political concerns." How did the scientist find out about DESKTOP? "He just stumbled onto it, I think. These scientists, they'd give them just so much information to work with, and no more. But everything was so interconnected, sometimes they'd figure it all out."

Radford was talking more easily now, but I had been there almost two hours and he still wouldn't discuss DESKTOP and had yet to identify the scientist. As casually as possible, I asked him the name. "You don't know?!" he exclaimed. "Then how did you find out about the meeting? There were only the three of us there, I didn't tell you and Robinson's dead. Who else knew?" Radford stopped to think. "General Haig was in on it, I suppose. He was notified by an eyes only memo. And Captain Shephard, he was supposed to tell Zumwalt. And I think Admiral Moorer was notified through General Knowles. But none of them would have told you."

The scientist's discovery of DESKTOP had obviously shaken the Pentagon. Radford had just named Kissinger's top deputy, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. I offered the yeoman a deal: identify the scientist, and I'll leave you alone. "I can't do that," he said. "It would be the same as giving you DESKTOP. The scientist knows all about DESKTOP." If you don't

cooperate, I warned, you'll be caught in the middle of another scandal. "I know," he sighed. "It's going to be the same thing all over." If you help me, I'll protect you. "You can't," he insisted. "They'll find out you've been here. They watch me. I know."

I handed Radford my pen, pushed my notebook in front of him and whispered, "Just write down the name. No one will ever know." He held the pen poised in midair a minute or two, then dropped it on his desk. "I need some time to think," he said. So did I.

DESKTOP, it seemed clear, was not merely an undisclosed title for the military spy ring. Weinglass had to be wrong. The next morning I called the Pentagon investigator to whom the yeoman had first confessed, a lawyer in the Special Prosecutor's Office who had seen the Plumbers' report, and Senator Sam Ervin, who had received a White House briefing on the affair. None recognized the code word. If the scientist knew its meaning, then DESKTOP and his top secret project were at least closely related. Perhaps they were one and the same.

Radford had the answer. But he was both too scared and too security-conscious to talk. A converted Mormon who had served 12 years in the Navy, his faith in authority had been shaken but not destroyed by the ugly way he had been used in the spy ring scandal. I had to convince the yeoman I knew more than he did, that I was taking him into my confidence only because I needed the scientist's name, that I was onto an abuse of authority so subversive it was his patriotic duty to help expose it.

"I know about the undersea ABM system," I informed Radford when we met for lunch two days later. The yeoman seemed almost relieved. "Yes," he said. "There is an underwater ABM. You must have a very high-level source."

"Very high-level," I improvised. "How did *you* find out about the ABM?"

"I read nearly everything I got my hands on. There was a memo that came through JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff] channels, I think, and I may have seen documents in the White House 'sit room.' "

Radford had been assigned to his sensitive post in September 1970, and was removed in December 1971. I asked him if the ABM was already completed when he left Washington. "I don't know," he replied. "It started before I arrived, and it was under construction while I was there. I think it had reached an advanced stage—people were quite serious about it." And it involved sea-floor missiles? "Yes, it was supposed to be a defensive missile system, underwater." How was it connected with satellites? "I can't talk in technical terms, but it was somehow interconnected with satellites and possibly the submarine system."

And that's what DESKTOP was all about? "It was connected with it." What else was involved? "I won't answer any questions," Radford recoiled. "I can confirm what you already know, but I won't answer any questions."

"There's also an offensive missile system on the ocean floor," I ventured.. "I wasn't aware it had progressed to reality," the yeoman said. He seemed disturbed. "I knew of plans for an undersea offensive system, and something may have been tested, but it wasn't deployed while I was in Washington. Are you sure they've done it?" Yes, I lied. Did you know the *Glomar* was involved? "No!" Radford exclaimed. He had mentioned in our first meeting that he was privy to Project Jennifer in its planning stages. "It could possibly have been," he added. "There could very easily be a connection between DESKTOP and the *Glomar Explorer*, but I didn't know about that."

Who financed the weapons system? Radford mumbled: "The names Howard Hughes and David Rockefeller were mentioned"

DESKTOP, was that the code name for these secret weapons systems, or plans for their use? "Both."

Don't you think the American people have a right to know all about this? I asked. There was no response. The Russians have been told, I lied. "The Russians know?!" Radford was deeply upset. "The things that are done in the name of détente," he lamented. I thought you knew that, I went on. Wasn't the real aim of the military spying to find out if Kissinger knew of, or was giving information about, DESKTOP to the Russians? "You're on the right track," he replied.

Was *anyone* outside of the military involved in DESKTOP? "Not that I know of," said Radford. "A lot of civilians who worked for the Navy, I suppose, but that's not really outside and they'd only see a small part." How about the President? "Well, I would think he must have been informed. Oh, I don't know—I suppose anything is possible." But Congress was never told? "Not to my knowledge," the yeoman said. "There were debates in certain circles about whether Congress should be told, and it was decided not to."

Radford had just suggested a military conspiracy of monumental proportions. For years Congress had been allowed to debate proposals for a land-based ABM while the Pentagon quietly hid one in the ocean. There were at least clandestine plans for offensive undersea missiles as well. Not only the Seabed Treaty but also the SALT agreements had been violated (unless the systems had been dismantled before the treaties were ratified in 1972). Moreover, it was a gross violation of the U.S. Constitution, in that vast sums were apparently spent without congressional appropriation.

"Congressmen are a bunch of fools," the yeoman said in response to my arguments. "They don't understand these things. The military knows best." Were these his own ideas, or had he picked them up at the Pentagon? Civilian control of the military is at the very heart of our entire system of government, I stressed, pushing harder. "The military will turn it all over when the time comes," he replied.

How had the secret weapons system been financed? If Congress hadn't approved it, billions in taxpayer money had been stolen from the U.S. Treasury. "It wasn't taxpayer money," Radford mumbled. What do you mean, it wasn't taxpayer money? I demanded. It's *all* taxpayer money. "No," he insisted. "Other persons, private parties were involved." Which private parties? Were there any documents to prove this? "You don't understand how things work at these levels," he explained. "Nothing like that was ever put in writing. I just overheard conversations. The names Howard Hughes and David Rockefeller were mentioned."

It was hard to accept. I had set out to convince Radford of a dangerous conspiracy, and he had described a cabal beyond my imagination. Nuclear missiles secretly deployed at the bottom of the ocean, without the knowledge of Congress, in direct violation of major treaties, known only to a few military leaders and the billionaires who backed them. The yeoman certainly knew about DESKTOP—his incredible reaction to my mention of the code word left no doubt about that—but now it seemed he had confused it all with a James Bond movie.

And still he wouldn't disclose the scientist's name. It made no sense. His explanation that he could only confirm what I already knew (or he thought I knew) was not sufficient. Not in this context. There was no time for more ques-

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tions; Radford had to return to his ship. Perhaps I had pushed a suggestible young seaman too hard.

Then a sudden series of events forced me to take Radford quite seriously again. When I called him aboard ship the next day, I was told the yeoman was not allowed to come to the phone. That evening I visited his home. Radford said he had been summoned by his commander, Captain Robert J. Anderson, and questioned about our meeting. A crew member had reported seeing us together. "I knew this was going to happen," said the worried yeoman. "You have to stay away from me now." I waited two days and returned to his house Saturday. Radford had been grilled by Naval Intelligence on Friday. "They know about you," he said. "But they really don't know what you've got yet. I just told them you asked about my tour of duty in Washington. But they'll be back." The yeoman was terrified. "And another thing," he added. "The local police called this morning. They asked if you were here." On Sunday, I saw Radford at home again. Five minutes after I arrived, Captain Anderson appeared. He cut off our conversation, hustled the yeoman into his house and remained inside almost half an hour.

Radford had been silenced. He reluctantly confirmed that the scientist lived in the Los Angeles area and suggested there was still more to DESKTOP than I knew, but refused to elaborate. Five days later he was interrogated again for several hours by Naval Intelligence. "They know about DESKTOP," he said ominously. Have you told them about the scientist? "Not yet, but I'm not going to be able to hold out much longer. They said they'd be seeing me again." He paused, then added, "One of the agents has been assigned to my ship."

I was back in Los Angeles by that time, trying to find the scientist before he too was intimidated. Weinglass still refused to name his client. Calls to Navy research centers in the area turned up no former employee fitting the vague description I could safely give. Finally, a source told me that the man Weinglass represented had been involved in the recovery of an H-bomb lost off the coast of Spain in 1966 when a B-52 crashed near Palomares.

There were three books and reams of newspaper copy about that strange operation. By cross-checking the names, it was possible to narrow my search to two members of the scientific team: Raymond J. Smith, a sea-floor geologist who had worked at a Navy laboratory in Port Hueneme, California, and Howard Talkington, an underwater technician from Pasadena who had developed the complex apparatus that finally succeeded in retrieving the 20-megaton bomb 80 days after it had disappeared into the Mediterranean. Talkington seemed the best bet. But he was still working for the government, now at the Naval Undersea Center in San Diego. The man I was seeking had been fired.

Smith was more difficult to locate. The Naval Civilian Engineering Laboratory at Port Hueneme said he had been transferred to the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey. His former colleagues there called him a "loner," and none knew his current whereabouts. But a clerk in the personnel office confided that "there had been some controversy regarding his separation." High military officials seemed interested in his case, and the work he had done had not been handled through normal channels. "But I can't help you," the clerk said. "We have no records here. All his files have been removed to Washington."

Any word of the project, Smith warned, could be "damaging to the U.S. population. . . . It could be as important as the Manhattan Project"

It was the same story when I checked back at Port Hueneme. Smith's records had disappeared. No one knew where he was, and my persistence was clearly creating concern. Eventually my inquiry was referred to Henry Gil, director of the laboratory's ocean engineering division. "Save yourself some trouble," said Gil. "No one's going to tell you anything about Ray Smith." Why not? "Look," he replied, "we do a lot of important national defense work here, and if you're a patriot you won't pursue this further." It's just the H-bomb recovery that interests me, I explained. "Then find someone else," Gil suggested.

"I probably shouldn't get into this," he continued, "but Smith was involved in a highly classified program. It's the type of thing that allows us all to go to sleep at night and not worry about waking up in the morning. Do you understand?"

I understood perfectly. Dr. Raymond J. Smith was the mystery scientist. He could confirm the secret ABM, provide technical detail and solve the DESKTOP enigma. He probably knew about the offensive undersea missiles as well, apparently held the missing link to Watergate and, if he didn't know about Hughes and Rockefeller, once he talked the Pentagon would have to explain how the hidden weapons project had been financed. And he would talk. A quarter million dollars, perhaps even his life, was on the line.

Without first calling, I appeared at Smith's suburban Ventura home. He led me into the kitchen, pushed a cat off a chair and invited me to sit down. Piles, folders and boxes of papers covered every available surface—it was obviously an accumulation of years. "We haven't had a chance to straighten up today," the balding, grey-haired scientist mumbled apologetically. "What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Tell me about DESKTOP," I replied. Smith emitted a series of silent whistles. "There's nothing I can tell you," he said. "The only thing I really know about DESKTOP is the name." Yeoman Radford says you know about DESKTOP. "You spoke to Radford?" Smith asked with surprise. "He told you that? Well, they probably are convinced I knew all about DESKTOP." The scientist chuckled. "You know, I was at a meeting with the sailor and Admiral Robinson right before the Watergate break-in," he went on. "I think DESKTOP was the code name for that whole Robinson-Radford spying enterprise. Someone ought to look into that."

DESKTOP, I insisted, is the name for the secret weapons system you worked on. "Oh no," said Smith. "The project I worked on has nothing to do with DESKTOP. It was a critical scientific program, any word of which is potentially damaging to the general population of the United States. It must be kept secret." I already know about the undersea ABM, I declared. "ABM?" asked the scientist. "I never worked on any ABM project." You've told people you did. "There's been some misunderstanding. I've told my lawyers that my project could be described as an underwater defensive system. Maybe they thought it was an ABM, but it wasn't." Did it involve missiles? "Oh no, it was much more esoteric than that." An electronic shield? "No," Smith laughed. Then what did it involve? "I'm not allowed to talk about that. It was very highly classified. This may be an exaggeration, but I think it could be as important as the Manhattan Project."

"It's only good if the Russians don't know about it," the scientist added. "They could take counter-steps."

Smith disappeared briefly and came back with a document. It bore the

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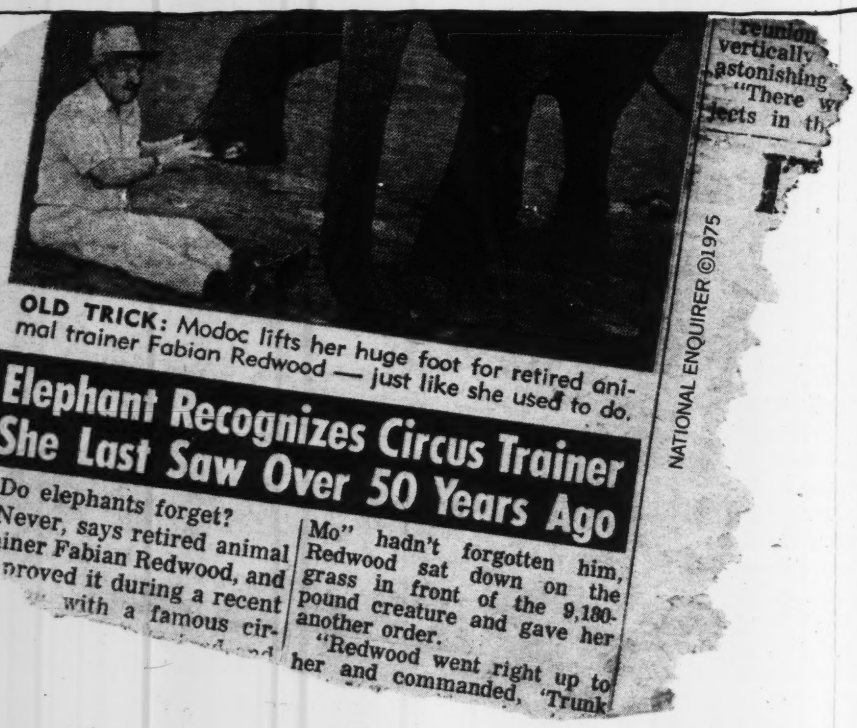

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Do elephants forget?
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Mo" hadn't forgotten him, Redwood sat down on the grass in front of the 9,180-pound creature and gave her another order.
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letterhead of the Navy's Special Projects Office, was dated 20 OCT 1965, and read:

CONFIDENTIAL

SP00123/AEG: claw
Serial: 028/W/65

Subj: Security Requirements; Project [CENSORED]

(1) This letter is to remind you that you are engaged in a highly classified project which affects the security of the United States. This project is unique in that compromise could seriously endanger the lives of U.S. Naval personnel or vitiate the enterprise.

(2) You are further reminded that you have a partial need-to-know and that, in fact, deliberate attempts are being made to insure that your understanding of this project is limited.

(3) It is clear, however, that you may, in the legitimate course of business, have access to information which will permit you to deduce or speculate on elements of the program not in your purview. Such speculation . . . could inadvertently result in a security breach.

The project's code name had been censored. But it called to mind something Radford had told me about DESKTOP: "These scientists, they'd give them just so much information to work with, and no more. But everything was so interconnected, sometimes they'd figure it all out."

Yet Smith continued to deny any link between DESKTOP and his top secret work. "That code word came up purely by accident," he insisted. "I don't know what it means."

The interview was not going as I had anticipated. Smith was contradicting nearly everything both Radford and Weinglass had said. The government must have gotten to him before I did. "Have you been contacted by government agents?" I asked. "Yes I was," he admitted. "Naval Intelligence questioned me. I think they were interested in DESKTOP." And they warned you not to talk to me? The question seemed to puzzle Smith. "No, this was years ago," he said. "After the meeting with Robinson and Radford."

It all began in April 1972, Smith explained. He had gone to Washington to present an important paper related to his classified project and at the same time iron out some personnel problems. Several months earlier, he had been forced to resign from the Naval Post Graduate School in a complex dispute impossible to resolve without revealing the nature of his top secret work. "I had been told we could expect problems because our superiors didn't know what we were doing," said the scientist. "My orders were to report directly to Washington and everything would be straightened out."

But security came first. Smith had been told that his project had the highest priority and secrecy of any in the Navy, and his instructions were precise: he was not to divulge anything to anyone who didn't know the code word. His last known project director had retired. So, following standard procedures, Smith said he made up a random list of 30 or 40 "code" names, all bogus except for the one designating his own program. He intended to present it to Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr., then Chief of Naval Operations. But Zumwalt was in Canada, and an aide eventually brought the scientist to see Vice-Admiral Joe Williams Jr., deputy CNO for submarine warfare.

"There I was in Williams' outer office, and suddenly I realized the aide had disappeared with my list of code words,"

Undersea missiles would give the U.S. an indestructible nuclear force: once in place, no one could detect them

recalled Smith. "I had to make up a second list in a hurry, so I looked around for objects in the office to use as fake project names—FILING CABINET, BOOKCASE and so on. One of the words I picked was DESKTOP.

"When I gave Williams the list, he was clearly shaken by it. He looked at me and said, 'There are *two* words on here,' and I asked, 'Well, what are they?' He read off my program and DESKTOP. He was staring at me and he had turned a bit white. I didn't understand what was going on. So I told him I just wanted to discuss my own project, I wasn't interested in DESKTOP. Williams said—he was very stern—'Don't ever mention that word again.' He told me it pertained to a very covert program handled by the Chief of Naval Operations and repeated, 'Don't ever mention that word around here again.'

"Then he took the list and tore it up into real, real small pieces—smaller than your fingernail—so you could never put it together again, and he put these tiny pieces into his burn bag. This sort of reaction was startling. You see, my program had been presented to me as the most highly classified in the Navy, and here is something that shakes this guy up to the extent that he doesn't care a bit about my program. All he cares about is this DESKTOP."

Smith's story was so authentically bizarre, I half-believed it. "You don't expect me to swallow any of that, do you?" I challenged him. "That's the way it happened," he insisted, seemingly unperturbed. DESKTOP, I reiterated, is your secret weapons project. "No, that can't be," said the scientist. "That a piece of office furniture could wind up being something in my field is really inconceivable to me. The only thing I knew about DESKTOP is that's what I was writing on in Williams' outer office—except that lately I've always tied it together with that screwy military spy ring."

Admiral Williams, he explained, arranged a conference the next morning, ostensibly to handle Smith's routine reinstatement as a Navy employee. "It was all so strange," continued the scientist. "Admiral Robinson was there, and a young sailor who acted quite odd. He was out of uniform, and as soon as the meeting started he got up and left. At the meeting this Robinson said nothing. It seemed he didn't know anything about my classified program at all. Williams did all the talking. I never got a chance to say a word. I got the feeling the whole thing was staged—that I was just put on view so that people could see me. We never solved anything.

"It didn't make any sense to me at the time. But when I read in the newspapers about the spy ring two years later, I suddenly remembered Admiral Robinson and realized that the sailor must have been Radford. By some wild coincidence, DESKTOP was the code name for their pilfering operation, and I was confronted with the two of them to test my reaction. Why else would they have been there?"

"That's not at all how Radford described your meeting," I interrupted. "He was only there two minutes," Smith replied. "How would he know?"

"Things were no doubt at a fever pitch in Washington then," he went on. "All these Navy guys had just been grilled about the spying, and I probably scared the devil out of them. And right after the meeting, I used the phone in Williams' outer office to call Senator Tunney. I tried to be as loud and conspicuous as possible, hoping to gain some leverage in solving my employment situation. They must have concluded I was some sort of agent, reporting on DESKTOP to the Democrats—a scientific Dick Tuck! And

the first Watergate break-in was just a month later."

"Whatever the case," Smith concluded, "that DESKTOP incident seemed to make me a pariah. I was never reinstated, and no one would ever tell me why." Shuffled from office to office in the Pentagon, the scientist finally contacted the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research and Development. He was promised a new job and told to wait in Washington. Smith waited three months. Nothing happened.

Meanwhile, back in California, Naval Intelligence agents were questioning his wife and neighbors. "They came to the house once, they came to her school twice and they contacted everyone in the neighborhood. Apparently they were trying to figure out who I was, who I represented and how I found out about DESKTOP. They seemed so interested that I went to their headquarters in Washington and said, 'Look, if you want to talk to me, here I am.' They said they never heard of me." Finally in late June, one day before Smith was scheduled to return home, an agent came to his Washington hotel. "I figured, now I'll find out what's going on, but this guy says, 'I don't know what this whole thing is all about, no one will tell me. Can you?' "

Four years have passed. Smith has been denied routine Navy and Civil Service hearings. He has been branded a "security risk." Private job offers have fallen through without explanation other than vague references to government intervention. There is some evidence his telephone may be tapped. And letters mailed to friends and colleagues have turned up among court papers submitted in response to the lawsuit Smith finally filed in August 1974. Apparently anxious to avoid a public trial, the Navy agreed to settle out of court last year. Payment has been promised by the end of March. Smith is now asking $350,000.

While the scientist makes light of it, he is clearly concerned about his future well-being. "After seeing what happened to Admiral Robinson, who probably knew all about DESKTOP, and Mrs. E. Howard Hunt, who was pressuring the White House, I decided that my trips would best be made by rail or bus."

In repeated interviews, the scientist refused to discuss his classified project, steadfastly stuck to his DESKTOP story and continually denied knowledge of an ABM of any nature or missiles on the ocean floor. Weinglass confirmed that his client had never actually used the term "ABM" and had spoken only of an "undersea defensive system." Instead of a final answer, I had a new set of riddles.

Yeoman Radford was not at all happy to hear from me again. He had been interrogated by the Navy a third time, and agreed to meet secretly at a shopping center only to avoid another visit to his home. He was worried that he had been followed, but there was no apparent surveillance. I've seen your friend Ray Smith, I announced. "Who?" asked Radford. Dr. Raymond J. Smith, I repeated. "I don't know any Dr. Smith," the yeoman said. "Who is he?" The scientist who was at your meeting with Admiral Robinson *and* Admiral Williams on April 14, 1972, I replied. "I wasn't even in Washington in April 1972," said Radford. "I left in the first week of January and didn't return until the Senate hearings in 1974. Smith's the wrong scientist, and there was no Admiral Williams at my meeting."

Perhaps you're confused, I suggested. You were only there a couple of minutes. "I was there the whole meeting,"

"Don't ever mention the word," Smith was told. He was startled. "My program was presented as the most highly classified. And all the vice admiral cares about is DESKTOP"

the yeoman insisted. "I spent the first *ten* minutes just serving beverages. And there was no one else but myself, the scientist and Admiral Robinson. It was in his Pentagon office in early 1971."

The wrong scientist at the wrong meeting in the wrong year. Radford had to be lying. But he wasn't. The yeoman had been stationed in Oregon in April 1972, and there was no record of any trip to Washington. And Admiral Robinson was then commander of the 11th Flotilla. He spent the entire month of April at sea in the western Pacific. I checked back with Smith and eventually determined that he had confused Robinson with an Admiral H.B. Robertson, who was then the Navy's deputy judge advocate general. Robertson confirmed the Smith meeting, but refused further comment.

Now I was sure Smith was somehow lying. Neither Robinson nor Radford was at your meeting, but they did meet with a scientist who stumbled onto DESKTOP, I told him. "That's really something, isn't it?" Smith responded. And Radford says that DESKTOP involves undersea weapons work, and you were assigned to a secret undersea military project, I continued. "Quite remarkable," said Smith. You know all about DESKTOP, I insisted. "If I knew the answer I wouldn't be here battling the Navy the way I have been," he replied. It was a good point. Then you must have learned the code word from a colleague, perhaps the scientist who really did meet with Radford and Robinson, I guessed. "I never heard that word before or after that meeting with Admiral Williams," Smith maintained. "To me DESKTOP is just a piece of office furniture."

If both Radford and Smith were telling the truth, the coincidences were incredible. The yeoman had confirmed DESKTOP, the stormy meeting and the sea-floor ABM based on my description of Weinglass' admittedly garbled account of his client's sometimes confused perceptions. Yet there could be no doubt that Smith at least knew the code word and Radford knew its meaning. How they were connected, other than by fate, I did not know. But if there were indeed two different scientists, one was still at large. I had to find him.

There was nowhere to turn but back to Radford. I called him aboard the *Hector* and tried again for the name. The yeoman wouldn't budge. If he couldn't be moved by moral force, then perhaps there was something he would fear more than the military's intimidation campaign. Recalling Radford's anguish over the Senate spy ring hearings, I threatened to have him subpoenaed by a congressional committee. "Oh no," he moaned, "not that again." Then tell me the scientist's name. "I can't do that—have me subpoenaed." The bluff didn't work, and a subpoena might well be impossible to arrange. Would you be willing to talk to a senator informally? I asked. "I doubt it. I probably wouldn't trust him," replied the yeoman, who had bitter memories of his last run-in with politicians. "OK, maybe that's the best alternative," he finally agreed. "I'll talk to a senator."

Now all I needed was a senator who would talk to Radford. In an ornate private room off the Senate floor, I met my first candidate for the task—a staunch liberal with a reputation for fearlessness and a strong desire for anonymity. Avoiding the more outlandish details, I told him about the secret nuclear weapons systems carried forward *without the knowledge of Congress,* in apparent violation of treaties and the U.S. Constitution, possibly financed with private money. The senator was reluctant to get involved. He

didn't want to compromise national security, but eventually agreed to hear Radford's story.

"Are you familiar with a military program code-named DESKTOP?" the senator asked the yeoman in a telephone interview.

"I know about it," Radford replied.

"What did it involve?"

"I'm not familiar enough to talk in technical terms, but certain things crossed my desk. I know about the program and what it was supposed to accomplish."

"And what was that?"

"It was supposed to be a defensive system, a defensive missile system, underwater."

The yeoman repeated to the senator nearly everything he had told me about the undersea ABM—that the project was already underway when he arrived in Washington, that it was under construction while he was there, that he had seen military documents outlining the program. Radford's story was no longer merely a tall tale told to a journalist. He was now talking to a United States senator.

But suddenly the yeoman began undercutting his account. Instead of elaborating on DESKTOP, he denied anything else was involved, insisted he knew nothing about plans for offensive seabed missiles, said there was no link between DESKTOP and the military spying and sidestepped questions about the project's funding. Asked about the scientist, Radford feigned confusion. There were so many meetings with so many people, he just couldn't recall the name. Guarded from the outset, he soon became slyly evasive, and finally openly arrogant. Before the interview was over, the yeoman was questioning the senator about *his* background. "There's something fishy about this," said the senator afterward. "I think Radford's some kind of agent," he added, eyeing me suspiciously. "I wouldn't touch this again with a ten-foot pole."

In a subsequent phone conversation with another senator's aide and then a face-to-face meeting with a Senate committee staff investigator, Radford backed off still further. He denied not only most of what he had originally told me, but also contradicted what he had just confirmed to the first senator. In the end, the yeoman suggested DESKTOP was merely a limited study of the feasibility of a possible ABM system. If there had ever been a scientist at a meeting related to that code word, it had completely slipped his mind.

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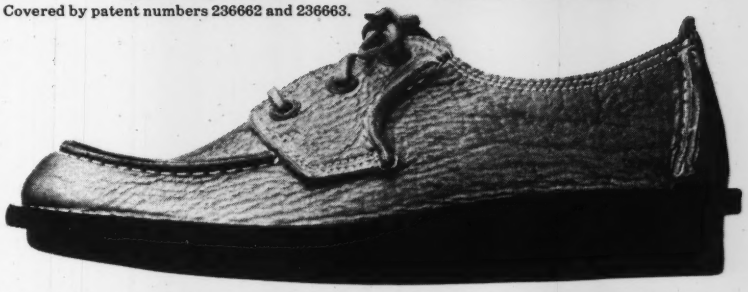

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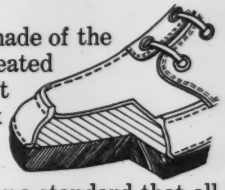

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This was not the same Radford who had nearly fallen into a dead faint when I first confronted him with DESKTOP. I later learned that before speaking with the senator, the yeoman had volunteered a "full statement" to his Navy interrogators. He apparently told them everything he knew. What they had told him could not be determined, but it soon became apparent that Radford's new story was remarkably similar to the Pentagon's official line.

My Capitol Hill surrogates had failed to find the mystery scientist, but there was one scientist I did know about. Dr. John P. Craven was until late 1970 the Pentagon's undersea Dr. Strangelove. As chief scientist of the Navy's Special Projects Office, he played a key role in the development of the Polaris-Poseidon missile-launching submarines. As head of the Deep Submergence Program, he openly advocated military "occupation and utilization" of the ocean floor. He was at one time the director of Smith's mysterious top secret project, had been involved in the Palomares H-bomb recovery and was at least privy to the clandestine doings of the *Glomar Explorer*. If nuclear missiles had been hidden beneath the sea, it was likely John Craven knew about it.

Reached at the University of Hawaii, Craven confirmed that sea-floor missiles had been "considered" and found technologically feasible, but insisted he was "completely unaware" that either an ABM or an offensive system had ever been deployed. He did concede that "floating silos"—encapsulated missiles designed to surface and fire—were tested in the early Sixties, but said they were rejected as unnecessary.

Are you familiar with the code word DESKTOP? I asked. "Nope," said Craven. You never heard that word? "Well, let me put it this way—any code word you name, I'm just going to say no, of course I haven't heard of it." His response to questions about the *Glomar* was similar. "If it was involved, and I was aware it was involved, I'd be bound by law to tell you I was not aware."

Nervous and halting throughout the interview, Craven's concern peaked with my mention of Raymond J. Smith, the scientist's strange encounter with Admiral Williams, his discovery of DESKTOP and his ultra-secret military work. Craven admitted receiving a call from Williams after the April 1972 meeting, but denied it had anything to do with DESKTOP. He acknowledged Smith worked on a classified project, but denied it involved seabed missiles and refused further comment. How important was that project? I asked.

Craven remained silent. Finally he answered solemnly, "*Very* important." A short time later, Craven suggested I discuss the national security implications of my story with Navy officials.

The Navy's Chief of Information, Rear Admiral David M. Cooney, was expecting me. He was clearly well aware of my investigation. When I confronted him with my knowledge of the sea-floor missiles and asked if its disclosure would compromise legitimate national security interests, Cooney just smiled. "DESKTOP does not involve weapons systems," he said flatly. "You're completely off-base." In that case, I replied, I'll go ahead and publish what I have. If my information is wrong, it certainly won't jeopardize national security. "Let's not be hasty," the Navy spokesman suggested, suddenly concerned. "I'll check this out thoroughly, and get back to you."

The next day a formal written denial was hand-delivered to my hotel. It read: "With the exception of mines, the U.S. Navy unequivocally denies that it is conducting any program to develop, test, procure, emplant, emplace, operate or otherwise employ any weapon or weapon system for use in the seabed. Further, the Navy is not involved in any activity in violation of the [1971 Seabed Treaty], nor is it using funds in support of any seabed weapons system. . . . In short, contrary to your allegations, the U.S. Navy is fully in compliance with the U.S. Constitution, applicable authorization and appropriation legislation, and its treaty obligations."

The Navy issued a statement: DESKTOP was an "extremely sensitive analysis program dealing with foreign activity." No one in Congress had been "specifically briefed"

At first glance, the denial seemed absolute. Then I noticed that it was all phrased in the present tense and was limited to weapons for use *in* the seabed. I asked Cooney if he would amend his statement to cover past activity and include weapons deployed *on* the ocean bottom. It took him several days to respond. "Missiles in or on the seabed were things considered in various modes in the past," he finally conceded. But the spokesman insisted the plans had been abandoned and were "never reduced to hardware."

Whatever the veracity of his response, it left unanswered the DESKTOP question. If it was not an undersea weapons program, past or present, then what was it? Cooney at first refused to discuss the code word at all. When he relented, it was only to say that it involved "a program conducted at the highest level of classification in the best interests of the United States." Why then had Smith's mention of DESKTOP so shaken Admiral Williams? "Let's say you have a program called 'Mockingbird' known to a very few people—50, or even 15—and suddenly a virtual stranger walks into your office and says, 'Mockingbird.' Of course you're going to be upset." Especially if that program is in some way illegal, I noted. "There is nothing illegal, improper or unauthorized about DESKTOP," insisted Cooney. "It isn't the name for 'let's go spy on Henry Kissinger,' if that's what Smith told you." Cooney also flatly denied that it was an anti-submarine warfare project, as one congressional investigator had been told. "DESKTOP," he added, "does not involve undersea activity or equipment of any nature." Then what is it? "That's classified."

Several weeks later, the Navy finally issued a carefully worded formal statement endorsed by the Pentagon's chief spokesman. It read: "For a long period there existed an extremely sensitive analysis program dealing with foreign activity called PROJECT DESKTOP. There has never been any U.S. weapons system development effort as a part of this exclusively analysis effort."

It was finally official. DESKTOP was real, it was big league and it was very covert. If the Pentagon was willing to admit that much, I must have come closer to a raw nerve than the military's string of denials suggested. Dr. Smith could not be dismissed as a mad scientist, and Radford was not merely an imaginative clerk. DESKTOP was a solid fact. If Radford knew enough to fear that reality, could the rest of his story be discounted? Not on the basis of the Navy's official statement. It left too much unanswered.

What kind of "analysis program"? Which "foreign activity"? Why so "extremely sensitive"? Who were the select few behind it? How was it financed? When did the "long period" of its existence begin? When and why was it terminated? All Cooney would add was that the program was operated by the Navy, and that "obviously one normally analyzes for intelligence purposes." He

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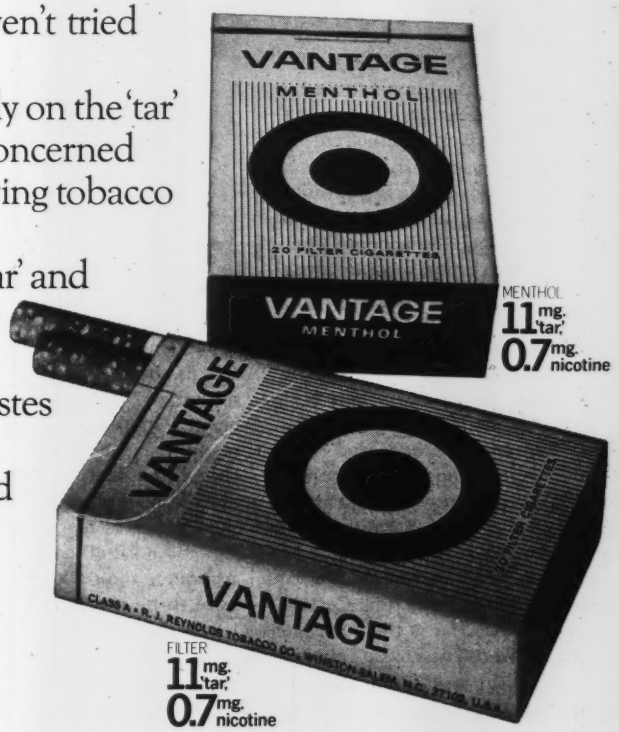

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claimed it was financed by congressional appropriation, but would not reveal the amount of money involved and admitted that no one in Congress was "specifically briefed." For "national security reasons," he would not disclose whether the program had been approved by the National Security Council or the 40 Committee. Everything else—when the program began, why it was abandoned, the nature of the "foreign activity" supposedly analyzed—also remained "classified."

To protect national security, or cover up a criminal conspiracy? An undefined truth, or an undefinable lie? Why hadn't anyone in Congress been briefed? Why did DESKTOP so terrify Radford? Why did it scare Admiral Williams? I went to Norfolk, Virginia, to interview Williams, who is now commander of the submarine force for the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. On orders from Washington, Williams refused to discuss DESKTOP, Dr. Smith, their tense meeting or the scientist's top secret project. Radford had said three other ranking officers were privy to the code word—Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr., the ex-Chief of Naval Operations, and Rear Admiral Robert O. Welander, who replaced Robinson as the yeoman's spy-master. All three absolutely denied any knowledge of DESKTOP, although the Navy had officially confirmed the program.

What is DESKTOP? A covert military program of unusual importance hidden from the American people and their elected representatives in Congress. All else is open to question. But the recent history of secret government operations is hardly reassuring and makes it impossible to automatically accept Official Truth or dismiss even the most bizarre allegations.

Yeoman Radford clearly knows, but his alarming answer could not be confirmed. That he recanted under pressure proves nothing. But his story came at the end of an odd chain of apparent coincidences, and may be confused. If he simply made up the undersea weaponry—and was willing to repeat at least the ABM part of that lie to a United States senator—then the real secret he is protecting must be truly incredible. Perhaps it involves the military spy ring. Certainly the yeoman's acute fear at the mere mention of the code word was quite genuine.

Dr. Smith insists he does not know, and his speculations are seemingly based on a misunderstanding. There is at least some chance, however, that his strange story is a fabrication, meant to protect the secrecy of his own mysterious project and/or the promised payoff on his lawsuit. Cunning or confused, Smith did know the code word. That his mention of it so upset Admiral Williams suggests DESKTOP's true magnitude. And the government's handling of the scientist's case since that encounter has been undeniably odd.

The Defense Department's official version is so vague as to be beyond challenge or verification. It too may be a lie. Certainly the Navy's refusal to offer details, its investigation of Smith, the intimidation of Radford, the silencing of Williams and the claimed ignorance of Zumwalt, Welander and Moorer all lessen the military's credibility. The Pentagon has hardly earned a reputation for candor, and obviously would have more reason to hide a damning truth than either Smith or Radford.

What is DESKTOP? At this point, a giant jigsaw puzzle. With only a handful of the pieces, some of which may be counterfeit, it is impossible to be certain of the full picture. But there are at least four apparent possibilities.

What is DESKTOP? A covert military program of unusual importance hidden from the American people and their elected representatives in Congress

Missiles under the sea: Radford's account seems so farfetched it invites skepticism. Yet there is no doubt that the United States can deploy nuclear missiles at the bottom of the sea. The technology has existed for years. The missiles could be hidden nearly anywhere in the world's oceans, housed in silos drilled into the subsoil or built on the sea floor, submerged in barges or on mobile launch platforms, encased in self-rising capsules, either free-floating or tethered. It may even be possible to establish manned missile complexes at great depths.

And it all could be done secretly. Although thousands of civilians would have to be involved, few would need to know the true purpose of their work. Once prefabricated on land, the weapons could be covertly deployed and serviced. "A ship like the *Glomar* could do it, and it would also be possible to do everything entirely underwater," concedes Dr. Craven. "With a deep submersible workship mated to a mother submarine, neither deployment nor maintenance checks could be monitored. After the missiles were emplaced, no one could find them. They would be undetectable by satellites or any other means of surveillance."

Offensive missiles concealed undersea would give this country a virtually indestructible nuclear force at a time when military leaders fear that land-based ICBMs are vulnerable to a surprise attack. They would also allow a massive U.S. build-up unknown to the Russians. A sea-floor ABM, connected with a satellite guidance and tracking system, could destroy enemy missiles in mid-flight. An ability to intercept inside the MIRV line—before multiple warheads scatter like buckshot—would overcome the problem that made our land-based ABM obsolete. And there would be no fallout over U.S. territory.

Many experts, however, doubt that a seabed ABM would be practical. Complex information must be relayed instantaneously, and communication is difficult underwater. A defensive missile must reach its target quickly, and a high-speed launch may be impossible undersea. On the other hand, many experts also questioned the feasibility of a land-based ABM. They were right. But that didn't stop the Pentagon from spending almost $6 billion on the Safeguard, which was finally abandoned just one week before it was to become fully operational. Tens of billions more would have been lost if the military's grand design had been accepted.

One thing is certain: if undersea missiles have been deployed, no one would know about it. It would have been done in complete secrecy. Both offensive and defensive systems would violate the Seabed Treaty, and an ABM would violate the SALT accords as well. Indeed, evasion of the SALT limitations would be a prime motive for hiding the weapons underwater. For that reason alone, Congress could not be told. And even before the treaties were signed, seeking congressional approval would have been risky. The Senate passed the Safeguard appropriation by only one vote. Given the option, it might well have turned down an ocean bottom ABM.

Radford just could have been telling the truth. The mere possibility demands an official inquiry. A military cabal willing to secretly acquire nuclear weapons may also be ready to use them.

Military spy ring: If Radford was lying about the missiles, perhaps he had a good reason—to avoid self-incrimination. If DESKTOP was the name for some par-

ticularly horrendous and undisclosed operation of the spy ring, the yeoman may have been ready to confirm anything but the truth. Radford did concede that the spying and the code word were in some way connected, and he also admitted that a great deal about the espionage remains untold.

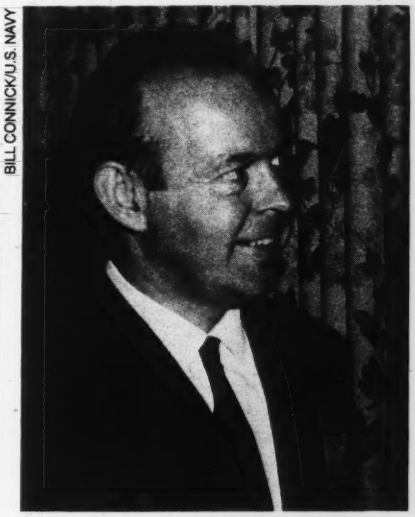
Or DESKTOP may have been the name for something pilfered—perhaps a dirty secret the Pentagon discovered while snooping on the White House. That would explain Nixon's suppression of the scandal, his decision not to punish any of the officers caught by the Plumbers and his reappointment of Admiral Moorer as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs just a few months after Moorer's involvement in the spy ring was uncovered. "I think it was an 'if you tell on me, I'll tell on you' situation," says W. Donald Stewart, the former chief of the Pentagon's investigation division, who played a key role in exposing the scandal. "It seems the military had developed some information on Nixon's operations, his international dealings, that he couldn't afford to have made public."

Smith's mysterious classified project: It would be uncanny if Dr. Smith guessed right about a link between DESKTOP and the spy ring, despite the fact that he never met with Robinson or Radford. But then again, he was right about the Radford connection. Perhaps the scientist knows more than he's telling. Perhaps his own top secret work was tied to DESKTOP. It is even possible that what the yeoman called an underwater ABM was actually Smith's "undersea defensive system."

The scientist revealed little about his project. But the fragments he reluctantly divulged do provide some insight. A sea-floor geologist, he was doing sediment studies for an undersea defensive system that did not involve missiles but was of a "more esoteric" nature. It was in some way connected with satellites. The system, he said, was designed to protect rather than destroy, but could conceivably be used offensively. It did not require any construction on the seabed, but did involve work in the deepest parts of the ocean. The entire program, he warned, was viable only if kept secret from the Russians, who could take counter-steps. And that would change the balance of power.

The intriguing puzzle begins to make sense in the light of a document Smith inadvertently included in his court files. In a December 1972 letter to Dr. Robert A. Frosch, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research and Development, the scientist disclosed a link between his secret project and the Palomares H-bomb recovery. "The occurrence of the Palomares incident," he wrote, "was fortunate in that it provided something of a small-scale dress rehearsal during which potential program deficiencies were pinpointed. The most conspicuous shortcoming noted was the inexperience of Naval officers with deep-water work . . . and this is considered critical as these are the persons assigned the operational phases of the classified effort." Smith refused to elaborate on his letter, and its recipient, Dr. Frosch, claimed neither to remember it nor to comprehend its meaning.

The letter never reveals the mission of Smith's project, nor does it mention its code name. But after noting the program's "unique security requirements," it states: "For identification purposes reference is made to SUBDEVGROUP ONE." Submarine Development Group One in Ballast Point, San Diego, is the Navy's chief center for researching, testing and developing deep submersibles. These manned workships can dive to the deepest parts of the ocean, remain on the bottom for extended periods and, through the use of external claws, handle a variety of tasks ranging from the rescue of sunken submarines to the recovery of lost H-bombs to the deployment of seabed missiles.



BILL CONNICK/U.S. NAVY

Dr. Raymond Smith: was the mystery scientist confused—or deceiving?

If Smith's secret project is not DESKTOP, it is almost as interesting an enigma. What kind of esoteric program involving manned submersibles and orbiting satellites would "allow us all to go to sleep at night and not worry about waking up in the morning"? An undersea nuclear arsenal, perhaps, but only if Smith is lying. (Several persons connected with the project did have backgrounds in missile development.) Another possibility is a highly advanced form of anti-submarine warfare, perhaps aimed at Soviet missile-launching submarines.

Whatever its full scope, it may at least involve the recovery of warheads from Russian missiles test-fired into the Pacific. In essence, an undersea *Glomar* operation. That would explain how the Palomares effort allowed for a "small-scale dress rehearsal." Such an operation would be a major intelligence breakthrough, enabling an accurate assessment of Soviet weaponry vital to our own strategic planning and quite useful in SALT negotiations. It would be invaluable if the United States were, indeed, secretly developing an ABM.

An extremely sensitive analysis program dealing with foreign activity: Perhaps, after all, DESKTOP is precisely what the Pentagon claims it is—an ultra-secret intelligence operation. But of what nature? Are we spying on our friends, or snooping on our enemies? And at what risk? While congressional investigators and newspaper reporters concentrate on the CIA, a vastly greater intelligence establishment operated by the Defense Department goes almost unexamined. The Navy alone spends more money on intelligence gathering than the CIA. Few of its endeavors are known, but those that have been made public should give us pause about the programs that remain hidden.

The *Glomar Explorer,* whose reported intelligence operation has been widely attributed solely to the CIA, was actually paid for with over half a billion dollars in Navy funds. Among the Navy's other known intelligence exploits were the spy ships *Pueblo,* captured by the North Koreans, and *Liberty,* sunk by the Israelis. One was operating in the territorial waters of a hostile nation, while the other had moved in too close to a war zone. And the Pike Committee's suppressed report reveals that in the past ten years U.S. Navy spy submarines, often carrying nuclear weapons in unfriendly waters, have been involved in at least nine collisions with enemy ships.

And now the Navy asks blind faith in DESKTOP—an operation known only to a handful of military leaders—offering the reassurance that it is only a secret intelligence program.

What is DESKTOP? Assume the best. Assume Yeoman Radford is lying. Assume Dr. Smith is confused. Even assume the Pentagon is telling the truth. Two indisputable facts remain: DESKTOP is real, and it scares those who share its secret. Why? ●

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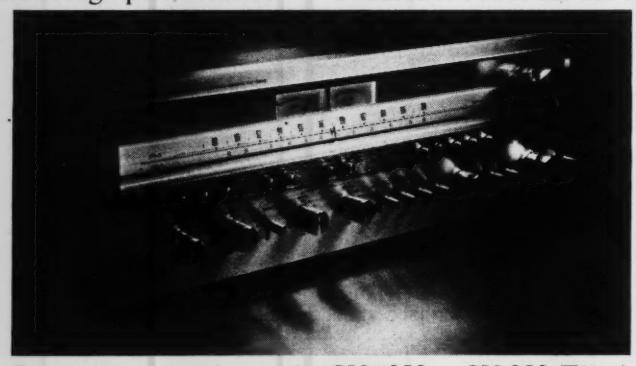

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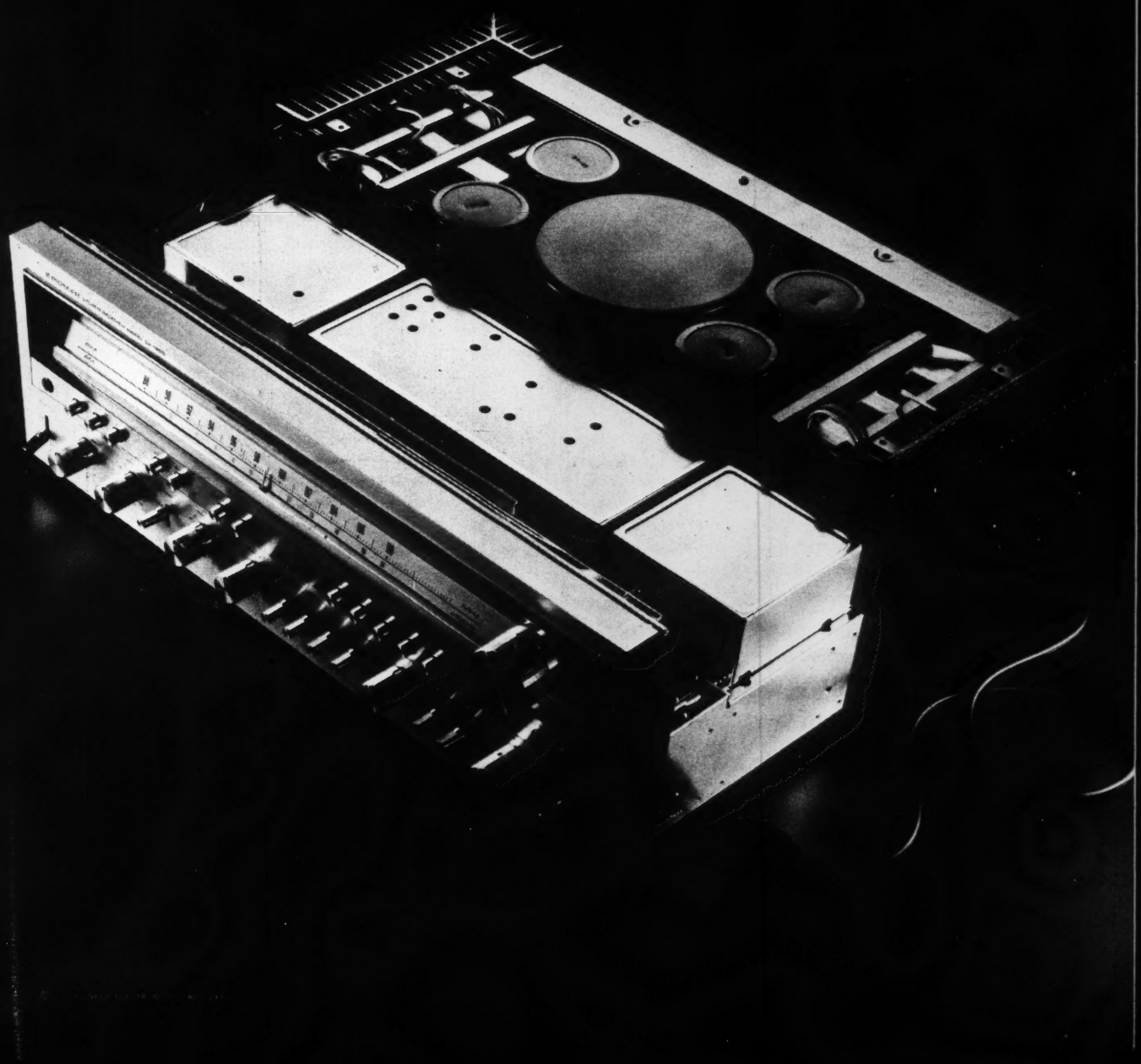
INPUT: PHONO-AUX-MIC	2-1-2	1-1-no	2-1-mixing	1-1-mixing
TAPE MON-DUPE	2-yes	2-yes	2-yes	2-yes
TONE	Twin Tone: Bass-Bass-Treble-Treble	Bass-Mid-Treble	Bass-Mid-Treble	Bass-Mid-Treble
TONE DEFEAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SPEAKERS	A,B,C	A,B	A,B,C	A,B,C
FM SENSITIVITY IHF '58	1.5 uV	1.8 uV	1.7 uV	1.7 uV
SELECTIVITY	90 dB	80 dB	80 dB	85 dB
CAPTURE RATIO	1.0 dB	1.25 dB	1.3 dB	1.5 dB



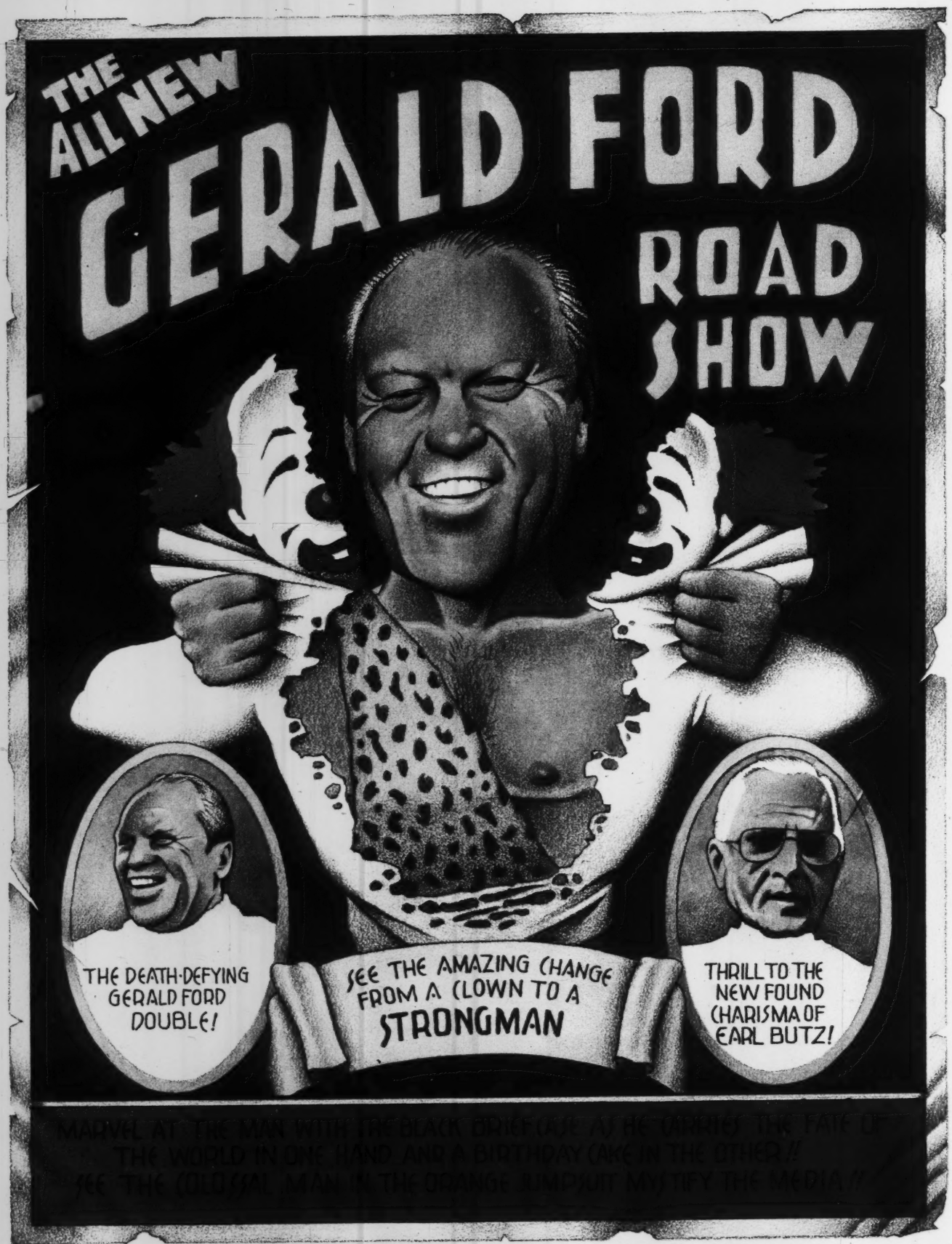

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ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON

A Ford not an Edsel

On the road with a resurgent President

By Ron Rosenbaum

These campaign trips can make life complicated for the man with the black briefcase. There are awkward moments of the kind he never has to face in the secure confines of the White House. Like that embarrassing situation at the Tampa airport when someone stuck him with the big pink Liberty Bell cake and he had to find a way to get rid of it without sabotaging the swiftness of our nuclear retaliatory potential.

You all know about the man with the black briefcase, the low-ranking military aide whose sole duty it is to stick close by the President wherever he goes, carrying in his hand the briefcase which holds the command and targeting codes for launching our thermonuclear arsenal. It *is* black, the briefcase, but otherwise it's not what you might expect: it's no gleaming titanium reinforced strongbox, it's not a sleek seamless vinyl job.

Nothing like it. In fact, the repository for the keys to nuclear death has a remarkable old-fashioned elegance to it if you ask me—supple, expensive-looking, pebble-grained leather with rounded corners, a simple square leather handle and overlapping flap of soft black leather that's fastened across the top by four simple silver snaps. More like Mark Cross than military procurement. No padlocks on it, no visible handcuff locking it to the wrist of the soldier whose lot it is to bear the briefcase after the President.

It's that very unobtrusiveness that seems to get the man with the black briefcase into some of these odd situations on the campaign trail. That time Saturday afternoon when he seemed genuinely lost, for example. It happened during a late afternoon motorcade stop at a fishing pier in Deerfield Beach, Florida. President Ford and his entourage were out on the pier, where the President was posing with a day-old prize marlin. Somehow in the confusion and the twilight the man with the black briefcase was cut off by crowds from the Commander in Chief on the way to the fish. I came upon him standing by himself in the middle of a parking lot adjacent to the pier, looking very formal and lonely as a crowd of sporty oldsters milled about him, oblivious to the nuclear triggerman in their midst.

His predicament at the Tampa airport Sunday was even more complicated. When President Ford stepped off Air Force One, a welcoming committee from the Tampa Holy Name School presented him with a big pink Liberty Bell-shaped bicentennial birthday cake. The grateful President handed the big pink pastry off to an aide, the aide handed it off again and before long someone stuck it in the one unoccupied hand of the man with the black briefcase. If he was pleased at this new responsibility he was careful not to let on. He looked around, but before he could find someone to take the cake off his hands, the Tampa High School Marching Band launched into "The Star Spangled Banner," and he had to snap to attention as best he could with hands full of cake and briefcase.

At the end of the anthem, the President walked over to chat with a Tampa soccer team called the Rowdies, who were part of the airport welcome. The man with the black briefcase hesitated about following. Might it not look unseemly for him to be marching behind the Commander in Chief, nuclear death in one hand, a pink cake in the other? He glanced back toward Air Force One. If he could only get someone to take the cake and put it on the plane. He started walking back toward the plane—away from the President—looking for help, but everyone was too busy. He reached the foot of the flight stairs up to the plane. Thirty yards now separated the nuclear triggerman from his Commander in Chief, and the man with the briefcase had to decide now: did he dare dash up the stairs and deposit the pink cake in the plane, thereby running the risk of putting a few more precious seconds between the President and our nuclear retaliatory might?

Like a flash he's up the stairs of the flight ramp two at a time. Inside the cabin door he finds someone who will take the burdensome pink bell off his hands at

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON

last. He hurries back down and across the landing strip to the President, who has been jawing away with the Rowdies all this time. The Rowdies have presented the President with an official Rowdies soccer shirt and a soccer ball autographed by each and every one of the Rowdies. The President looks at the soccer ball. "I used to handle the oblong shaped football pretty well," he tells the Rowdies. He reminds the Rowdies that football was once closely related to soccer, but adds that there are many differences between the way the games are played these days.

There was something in that scene emblematic of the evolution of Gerald Ford's presidency. A politician who'd spent all his life posing with all sorts of pink cakes, suddenly finds himself President, someone hands him the black briefcase with the nukes inside and he has his hands full. It's a different game entirely these days.

A Baptism of the Spirit

If you're looking for a turning point in the fortunes of Gerald Ford, you might consider the experience he had on Sunday evening, February 22.

The President's eyes are wet with tears. It's just 48 hours before the polls close in New Hampshire and, what with Richard Nixon in China and Ronald Reagan on his back, the President's prospects in that primary look bad enough at this point in time to make a grown man cry.

But it's not politics that prompts the President's tears tonight. It's prayer. That's right, prayer, and if you listen to some people it was something more than prayer that had just happened, something Very Big.

The scene was the Grand Ballroom of the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, the final evening of the National Religious Broadcasters Convention, a gathering of electronic evangelists, healers, holy rollers, radio revivalists, theologians, speakers in tongues. Ford came to speak but stayed for the final prayer, and it was the final prayer that produced The Moment.

I first heard about The Moment a week later from a reporter on the Ford campaign press bus during Ford's epic seven-hour motorcade down Florida's Gold Coast.

On motorcade stop #8, a rally in the luxurious Spanish colonial Boca Raton shopping center, Ford had just made a curious reference to something he called the "aristocracy of the soul." I had noticed Ford frequently making reference to things of the spirit in his remarks that trip—and also on the campaign swing through Illinois the following weekend—but the "aristocracy of the soul" struck me as something more than standard stump piety. It had an almost mystic Rosicrucian ring to it.

"Is that new, that 'aristocracy of the soul' line?" I asked a White House regular sitting next to me on the press bus.

"I never heard that before," he said. "But he can be a very religious guy. You should have seen him at that Religious Broadcasters thing. They had this preacher from around here, Moody's the name, who had everyone in that room holding hands, praying, crying. Not just Ford but some veteran Washington reporters there covering it."

Well that shocked me. It's part of the professional pride of the Washington journalist not to be impressed by anything he covers. And it was just about four years ago to the day when the front-running campaign of poor Ed Muskie was sent on its rapid decline to disintegration by the media attention devoted to the tear—or melted snowflake—that ran down his cheek during a heated moment in the New Hampshire primary.

Sometimes Air Force One will land, the double will step out first and the crowd will start cheering like it's Ford. If you ask me, they're cheering the right guy

So this Reverend Moody, the man who made the press corps cry, must be something special. After I returned from a second campaign swing with Ford and found the religious element in his rhetoric undiminished, I gave Reverend Moody a call and asked him about the moment of prayer that had so moved the President.

"I asked the President to join hands with me, and for everyone in the room to join hands, because that's the way I pray with my family at home," the Reverend Moody told me from his study in the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach. "And I said this simple little prayer, and there was a great hush fell on these people, and I looked down there and there were a half dozen of those reporters, veteran reporters, wiping their eyes, and Pat Boone all bleary-eyed down there in the front row, and Chuck Colson he was all choked up, and when I turned and faced the President there were tears in his eyes. . . ."

Reverend Moody—he calls himself a simple preacher but he's got syndicated religious TV shows on the air in half the country and 40 cable stations carry his "Seaside Bible Chats" ("It's the Bible with some background music, kind of a Rod McKuen thing," he says)—thinks The Moment was a turning point for Ford. He cites evidence of a spiritual revival in the Ford White House—staff prayer meetings in the East Wing, presidential prayer sessions with a few close friends, unpublicized and genuine piety. "I've noticed a remarkable change and deepening in the last few months. In the presidency, if a man is butter he'll melt, if a man is clay he'll harden. I think Ford is melting in a good way."

Just how far has Ford melted? Does the President speak in tongues? Richard Reeves, in *A Ford not a Lincoln*, his excellent book on Ford's first months, refers to Ford as "a Charismatic Christian." "Charismatic" is a term that has come to refer, in religious discourse, to those Christians who claim to be possessed by the Holy Ghost, who speaks in tongues through them. But Rev. Moody dissociates Ford from the charismatics. He does believe, however, that The Moment at the Shoreham was evidence of the President's Baptism of the Spirit, a sign that the Holy Ghost is now actively working within the President even if He wasn't speaking out loud. Rev. Moody cites various "fruits of the spirit" as evidence that Ford is one of the Elect.

"It was a turning point, I believe," Rev. Moody declared. "Dr. Leaming from St. Petersburg, who was there when it happened, told me, 'Jess, while you were praying I felt America turn around.' "

Certainly Gerald Ford's prospects turned around in the next 48 hours. The 1,300-vote victory Tuesday in New Hampshire led to an almost Lazarus-like revival of his candidacy and his presidency. By Saturday morning, when Air Force One and the press plane took off from Andrews Air Force Base for Ford's final Florida trip, the Ford people had seized upon the word "momentum" and were intoning it, even chanting it, for every reporter, microphone, every crowd large or small. The Rev. Moody might call what they had grace: when Ford stepped off Air Force One in Miami he was no longer the klutz, the stumblebum, the bozo he'd become since he fell from grace with the media after the pardon.

No, the Ford I saw campaigning that weekend in Florida and the following weekend in Illinois was a confident,

FRED WARD/BLACK STAR

Me and my shadow: One Secret Service agent (right front) so closely resembles Ford (left of center) that, upon seeing him, crowds have cheered as if he were the President.

buoyant campaigner, a tough, hard-hitting and shrewd politician, a forceful speaker. And, for whatever it's worth, this new baptism of the spirit he's undergone and the concomitant spiritual grace appears to have restored to him the effortless physical grace he'd enjoyed from the time he'd been a football all-American and a male model. Not once during the days I traveled with the campaign did he slip, trip, stumble or falter physically. He was Golden Boy again, and it began to look as if God was on his side.

The President and His Double

The Secret Service look-alike and the submachine gun took me by surprise. I had expected there would be some brand new security measures in effect since the Squeaky and Sarah Jane incidents, but these two still came as a shock. For a time, in fact, after I first noticed the look-alike, I began to question my belief in a revitalized Gerry Ford and began to wonder if there weren't *two* Gerry Fords and a strange kind of substitution going on.

I first became aware of the look-alike during the rain-soaked, seven-hour motorcade along the Gold Coast that afternoon. That epic motorcade—which seemed designed to take us within hailing distance of every wealthy white Republican retiree on the Atlantic Coast—represented an epic security problem. It was the first time since the California assaults that the President had undertaken such sustained exposed outdoor campaigning. The schedule called for 14 separate stops along the route, each one featuring an open-air speech preceded and followed by long bouts of handshaking through the assembled crowds. Between each stop were miles of motorcading, with the President frequently standing up through the slot in the roof of his limousine to wave to roadside bystanders, his head and torso exposed. Facing that nightmare, who could fault the Secret Service for supplementing conventional security measures with an unexpected resource: an agent who looked like Gerald Ford.

He's a veteran agent; I seem to recall him detailed to McGovern in the '72 campaign; he obviously wasn't recruited into the Service just because he looks like Gerald Ford. But there's no denying it, he *does* look like Gerald Ford: same height and build, he's bald in the same contours and the remaining hair is a similar color—although Ford's still has some Golden Boy highlights to it. Similar facial features, particularly jaw and brow. And the suits the two of them wore that day—could it be a coincidence that they both chose dark blue chalk-striped numbers of similar cut?

At the first stop on the motorcade—a crowded indoor shopping mall at West Palm Beach—the look-alike directly preceded Ford as he handshaked his way along roped-back crowds. A heavy, squally rain began to come down before the second stop and lasted through the rest of the motorcade. Ford plunged forward with the schedule, refusing to cancel any stops despite initially sparse crowds. He was turning this political campaigning into the other kind of contest he knows best—an athletic contest, a long-distance swim upstream. He even had his aides speculate out loud that he should cancel some of the stops so that, as he continued on, he might tempt reporters into writing, "President Ford today defied the elements and his advisers and made every scheduled stop on his motorcade. . . ." Through it all, through places like Briney Breezes, Sunshine Square, Hillsboro Beach, I would often glimpse the presidential limousine from the press bus through a curtain of rain and see one blue-suited figure stand up through the slot top, or see two blue-suited figures dash in and out under umbrellas. From that medium distance, I could almost never make out which was the President and which was the Secret Service man.*

Just to make sure it wasn't my imagination, I asked a White House regular on the press bus about the apparent resemblance.

"Oh yes," he said, "a lot of people get fooled. There have been times when Air Force One will land and that guy will step out first and the crowd will start cheering like it's Ford." If you ask me, they're cheering the right guy.

Not all of the new Secret Service security measures are that subtle. On the Illinois trip the following weekend, the presence of a submachine gun was noted for the first time on a visit to the Springfield, Illinois, home of Abraham Lincoln. Ford made one of his better speeches at the Lincoln home, working the mystical vein again with references to Lincoln's ghost, or his "presence," like an American Holy Ghost in the White House.

It was on the way back from that speech that the writer of the pool report stated: "As the motorcade pulled out from behind the home, your poolers noticed that an agent facing the rear on the backup car behind the limousine was cradling a submachine gun beneath his olive green topcoat."

With all that firepower, the Secret Service can still be fanatical about tiny details. At Centennial High School in

*If all else failed, the Secret Service man could be identified as the one who talks into his wrist. That's because, like all Secret Service agents and White House staff, he is equipped with the sophisticated miniaturized communications system—flesh-colored wrist radio and flesh-colored earpiece receiver—which keeps the agents aware of and in control of all the movements of the presidential entourage. The President doesn't wear the gear, which makes him the only member of the White House party who never knows what's going on, and why. All his information at any given moment comes only from those who control the flesh-colored plastic network.

Rantoul, Illinois, I had a difficult time identifying the men's room because the Secret Service had covered the MEN sign with opaque grey official "security tape," apparently to conceal it ahead of time in case the President used it.

The President Meets the Indonesian Palm Oil Challenge

One of the most impressive things about the new improved Gerald Ford campaign is the skill with which he's played the poker game of primary predictions, the sleight of hand which determines whether a 51 percent win is reported as a "disappointing failure to live up to big victory expectations" or a "stirring come from behind victory."

Perhaps the master stroke in this delicate game of illusion and media manipulation was Ford's unveiling of the phantom "12 percent gain" in the Florida primary. Now there are some who may say that Ford doesn't deserve the credit for this ploy, that it bears the stamp of Stuart Spencer, the onetime Reagan image maker who—in the nick of time, as it turned out—replaced Bo Callaway as Ford's acting campaign manager. But it was Ford who was shrewd enough to hire Reagan's image maker to unmake Reagan's image for him, and it was Ford whose deadpan delivery made the "12 percent" ploy so successful.

This is how it worked. On the first day of his final Florida trip, Ford spiced up his familiar claim of "having the momentum" with a provocative specific: he'd gained 12 full percentage points on Reagan in the past three weeks. Asked to explain, he cited Reagan's own Florida campaign manager, who had recently back-pedaled from an early prediction of a "two to one" Reagan victory to a more modest 55 percent victory claim. Subtracting 55 from the earlier 67 percent of the two to one claim, Ford said innocently, looked like a 12 percent gain to him. This device permitted him to maintain the image of winning momentum he'd derived from the New Hampshire victory, yet at the same time preserved for him the coveted "underdog" position in the Florida vote. It was the absolute ideal hedge preemptively robbing the sting from a close loss ("His stirring stretch drive fell just short") and preventing a Ford victory from being dismissed as "expected since he had been ahead since New Hampshire."

Also typical of the new Ford was his use of Earl Butz to finesse the farmers out of their opposition in Illinois. Much as I love Johnny Carson, he seems to be a bit out of touch with his Farm Belt origins when he makes Earl Butz the butt of so many gags. Butz is a hero on the farm. When Ford put an embargo on further Soviet grain deals last fall, Butz publicly spoke out against it and championed the grain growers against the rest of the government. Ford seemed to be heading for more trouble with the farmers when, in an effort to secure his right wing against Reagan in Florida, he publicly jettisoned "détente" from the national vocabulary. Détente means lucrative grain deals and high prices to Illinois farmers, and Ford had to do something fast to reassure them the deals would keep on coming.

What he did was spend a weekend lavishly and publicly embracing Earl Butz. At every stop in Illinois, the very first person he'd introduce, ahead of senators and former governors, was his "dear friend and close adviser Earl Butz." He embraced not only Butz but also the Butz position on the grain deals. He promised that his administration would "never use agriculture as a foreign policy tool," a brilliant device which let the farmers know that getting tough with the communists would never get in the way of their grain deals, and that only a fanatic like Reagan might actually *act* upon his anti-communist principles and stop feeding the Soviet slavemasters American grain.

The farmers all loved it. But can Ford convince city dwellers that meeting the Indonesian palm oil threat is more important than money for their schools?

Ford just couldn't stop lavishing goodies on Butz and the wealthy farmers Butz champions. A new cabinet-level committee on foreign policy and agriculture with Butz, and not Kissinger, in charge. A promise of an increase in estate tax exemptions for those poor farm families who are burdened with $150,000 estates. Bailout insurance for grain elevator operators ("under consideration"). Even extra help for Illinois soybean farmers threatened by a big influx of cheap Indonesian palm oil.

The farmers all loved it. Butz loved it. Ford obviously loves playing the game. The only question is: can Ford transfer his skill at manipulating Republican voters to the national electorate next fall? Can he convince city dwellers that meeting the Indonesian palm oil threat is more important than money for their schools?

The President Meets Some Poor People

The Ford schedule for the successive weekends of campaigning in Florida and Illinois called for more than 60 separate presidential appearances from small receptions and church services to airport welcomes and big rallies. About half of these were "open coverage," which meant they were accessible to everyone on the three big Greyhound press buses. The other half, usually the smaller events like receptions, are made accessible only to a smaller pool of reporters and cameramen, who travel in four station wagons close behind the presidential limousines.

Seeing an event from a pool once meant more access to the candidate and the event, and the raw pool reports that are made up for those left behind in the press buses still contain some of the best, funniest journalism about the campaign.*

But certain developments over the course of this campaign threaten to turn the pool into another packaging tool. This is the story of what happened to Pool #11 on the Florida trip, the pool covering the President's visit to the Sarasota Welfare Home.

Trouble over pool access to the President had been brewing all weekend and broke out into heated words during Pool #10's tour of duty at the Sarasota Shriners barbecue, an event celebrated in broiling sun on the grounds of what was once the winter quarters of the Ringling Brothers Circus. ("Monkeys and baboons once roamed these grounds," one of the Shriner speakers informed the crowd roaming the grounds and waiting for Ford.)

The way I understand it, the blow-up came over TV crew access during handshaking tours.

Lately it seems that the number and aggressiveness of the Secret Service men blocking out the media in these situations has increased. These days Ford is usually surrounded on three sides by at least six Secret Service men any time he shakes a hand in a crowd. And that often leads to moments in which even the sound man's long pole mike is kept out of

*The best, funniest pool report of this campaign, however, had nothing to do with the President. It's a report on an episode at the Peoria Hilton Hotel during the Illinois trip, in which several reporters smuggled a full-grown sheep—female—into the hotel room of a news magazine reporter who had been lured away from his room with the promise of an exclusive from Ron Nessen, who appeared to be in on the plot. The whole thing—an in joke based on the reporter's alleged proclivities for agricultural amours—nevertheless may be an indirect reflection of the sheep-like self-image of the White House press. Perhaps this year their story ought to be called "The Baaas on the Bus."

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pick-up range. What that can mean is that networks will end up with visual footage of an enthusiastic President shaking hands with enthusiastic voters, and no sound footage—aside from general cheering and crowd noise—that might make heard a discouraging word. The White House is not totally unhappy with that situation.

But the network people don't like it at all, and at the Shriners barbecue one network man began shouting out loud in frustration at the way Pool #10 was being manhandled out of hearing range. Nothing was resolved, and it was in that happy atmosphere that the next pool, #11, climbed into the wire service station wagons and sped off behind the presidential limousines toward the next stop, the welfare home.

On paper, this promised to be more interesting than some of the many mini events that had been staged for us. After all, Ford had spent most of this campaign weekend talking to rich old people in some of the richest, oldest, whitest enclaves in the state of Florida. It was shrewd politics—he needed to keep these people from going to Reagan—and it was even shrewder politics to throw in this token welfare home visit just so a potential opponent wouldn't be able to say Ford spends *all* his time catering to the special interests of the privileged. Still it might prove interesting to see whether Ford had any human reaction to seeing a poor person—would he do a double take?—after seeing so many rich.

When the motorcade arrived at the nursing home—a low wood-frame quadrangle of buildings surrounded by sparse dusty lawns and some dilapidated trailer camp sites—the advance people led the President around to the front door and the press pool around back. The pool was shepherded through the home to a grassy interior quadrangle open to the sky, where about 50 frail and pale old people—a dozen in wheelchairs—sat motionless, baking away unshaded in the fierce midafternoon sun. A few black attendants stood around. All of the old people were white. The advance people herded the pool—about 10 reporters, still photographers and cameramen—behind a porch railing at the rear of the quadrangle 10 feet from the nearest old person.

The President and Mrs. Ford entered from the end of the quadrangle opposite the press. They began chatting with some of the old people healthy enough to respond. Many seemed too feeble to talk and merely nodded. ("Don't get up," the President said to two women in wheelchairs, according to one of the pool reporters.) An official White House photographer accompanied the Ford couple, snapping pictures of each of them with arms around assorted oldsters. The black attendants circulated with cups of fruit juice for some of the patients who had been baking in the sun. It appeared as if they had been asked not to serve the juice until the President arrived and that some of the residents had been waiting some time for a sip of juice because of the delay.

About this time a huge black man in an orange jumpsuit emerged from the side of the quadrangle opposite the pool. He was carrying a microphone that didn't look attached to anything, and a camera. He waddled up to where the Fords were and joined them in their chats with the nursing home residents. It was very odd. No one seemed to know who he was.

Meanwhile, the pool reporters and camerapeople moved to step down from the porch on which they had been confined and start over to catch some exchanges between the President and the patients.

Without this last shred of unrehearsed reality in the reporting of political campaigns, there's no reason not to hire actors to play the part of citizens at staged events. Perhaps they already do

First a White House press man blocked the steps down from the porch to the quadrangle. He claimed it was Secret Service orders. An appeal to the Secret Service man nearest led to the responsibility being shifted back to the press man, who shifted to the advance man, who refused to say anything, and the second futile shouting match of the day ensued. It went something like this:

REPORTER: "This is absurd. He's over there talking to everyone and we can't get over there."

WHITE HOUSE MAN: "He's saying, 'Nice to see you.' That's all."

REPORTER: "Well, what did we come here for anyway?"

SECOND REPORTER: "And who's the guy in the orange with the microphone?"

W.H. MAN: " 'How are you. Nice to see you.' He also signed some lady's Bible."

THIRD REPORTER: "We're supposed to get the name, see who he talked to, talk to them. Otherwise these are just photo setups for you."

W.H. MAN: "You can't all go down there and trample over those people."

SECOND REPORTER: "Then why have a pool at all? Why not let us send one person and one camera down there?"

W.H. MAN: "A pool for the pool? I think we're running late for that now."

By this time the President had finally made his way to the rear of the quadrangle near the porch where the pool was being held at bay. Smiling up at us, the President put his arm around an elderly lady who was standing close by staring into space. Gently but efficiently he turned her around to face the pool cameras on the porch, put his arm around her, hugged her to him and said, "Hey, wouldn't we make a great couple?"

The woman gave no indication she understood what was happening, but she smiled back at the President's smile and the cameras got them that way, the President and his poor person for the day. That was it. None of us got to speak a word to any of the residents of the home or get their reactions to the President. And no one ever found out who the strange fat man in the orange jumpsuit was.

On the surface it may appear trivial, reporters demanding to listen to what a few feeble poor people say to the President. But what they're fighting for is the last shred of unrehearsed reality in the reporting of presidential campaigns. Without that there's no reason not to hire actors to play the part of senior citizens and other representative Americans at such staged events. Maybe they already do.

The Last Word

Conversation between Ron Nessen and a reporter on the press bus, not long after Nessen tried to hitch a ride in the wire service car and was unceremoniously evicted, apparently on the grounds that the press shouldn't subsidize the President's staff with transportation.

NESSEN: "Well, Reagan himself would ride around in his press bus in New Hampshire. You were subsidizing him there."

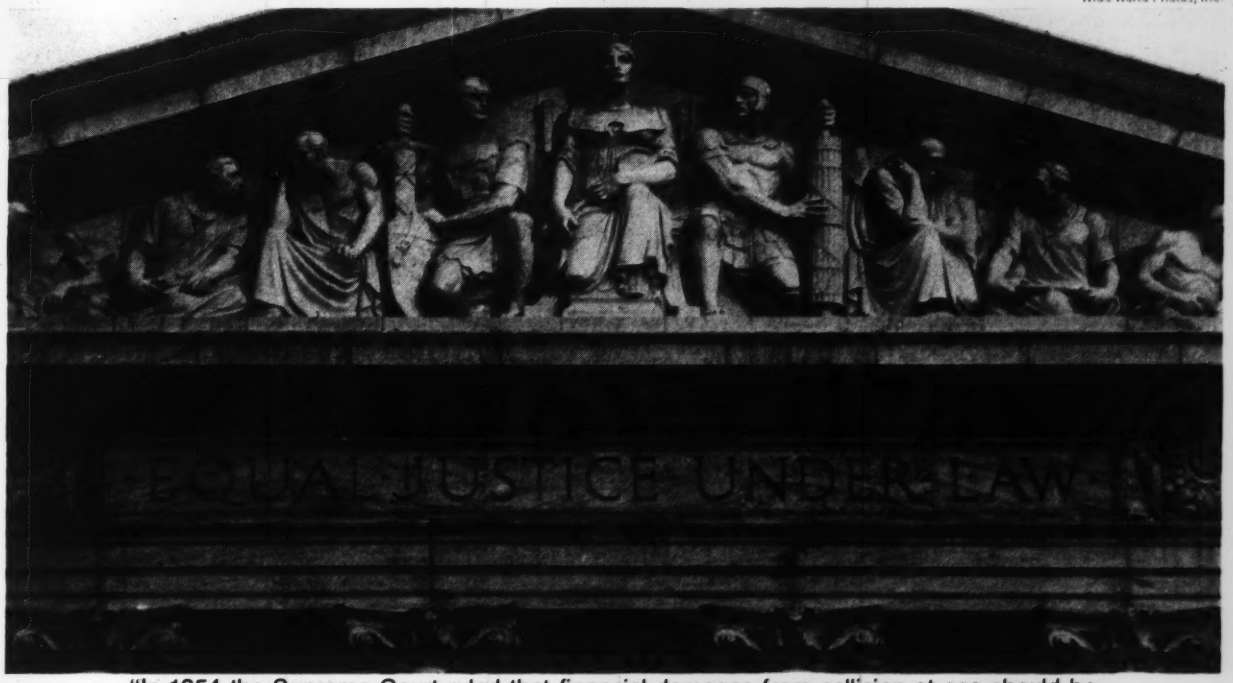
REPORTER: "We're doing more than subsidizing your guy. Just by being here we're *electing* him."

NESSEN: "Not if you can help it."

REPORTER: "We can't help it."●

"Once they have set a course, courts can be as slow to come about as a square-rigger in a flat calm."

Wide World Photos, Inc.



"In 1854 the Supreme Court ruled that financial damages from collision at sea should be divided equally among those at fault. Now they have finally managed a reversal of course."

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The Weekly Newsmagazine

SHOWDOWN AT KAI

By Michael Parfit

Like the human decision that hangs over it, the land of the Kaiparowits Plateau impends. In this part of Southern Utah, rocks loom over precipices, balance on cliff edges and pause on canyon walls in stalled improbability. Stone is pierced with holes and dimpled into lace patterns. Blobs of dry mud slop down hillsides in terraces. Alkaline sand streams down dry washes, littered with animal footprints and bits of petrified wood. From ground level on the Benches, the land seems to undulate away to 70 mile horizons beyond which can be seen the tops of even more distant clouds, but the smoothness is illusion: the flat tops are sliced in all directions by canyons so freshly split that it seems the dust should still be rising. The land is playing red light, green light with us, and as we turn to look, it strains to hold its place, foot in the air, body leaning. Surely when we turn away it will run and crash and ooze and throw stones over our shoulder. Only yesterday it dropped a boulder on a man in a boat on the lake below it, and killed him.

Today, portions of the Kaiparowits Plateau are marked by patches of bulldozed ground, each spiked in the middle by a steel post bearing a welded number: 310, 356. These mark core holes, coal prospects. Knowing their purpose, it is easy to imagine that the posts extend a couple of thousand feet into the ground, and it seems that someone has come to finally pin the free land down.

In a way the image is true. A consortium of power companies from Southern California and Arizona has been planning for over a decade to build the largest mine-mouth coal-fired power plant in the nation on this plateau, whose Paiute name means "mountain home of the people." Now, after years of controversy, in which the proposal was killed once by the Department of Interior and then revived, the Kaiparowits project has come to another point of decision: Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe is planning to rule on its future early in April. What he does will have an effect on more than just this plateau: because of its size and location, and because it is only an enlargement of a new but common Western experience, energy development, Kaiparowits has become a symbol for the nation.

Two scenes frame the Kaiparowits story for me. I participated in neither, but I have rebuilt them out of interviews and newspaper reports. The first begins in a Southern California Edison (SCE) helicopter high above the plateau.

Aided by a determined Robert Redford, environmentalists are battling construction of the largest coal-fired power plant in the nation. With Interior Secretary Kleppe about to rule on the plant, the Kaiparowits controversy symbolizes the fight for America's last primitive wilderness

As the machine thumps out over a part of the Kaiparowits Plateau called Nipple Bench, scattering the native silence, a passenger, Robert Redford, peers out a side window. Redford is here because he has become the public champion of the plateau's endangered isolation, and SCE, the company most responsible for the impending change, would like to persuade him that it really isn't worth saving. As he scans the terrain with the wary eyes of a Pinkerton detective being escorted to the Hole in the Wall by the Wild Bunch, aligning the locations of Lake Powell and Bryce Canyon National Park to east and west so he'll remember where they are on the ground, he notices a black rectangle in the center of the Bench, a blot which, as the helicopter descends, becomes a man wearing a suit and a hard hat, seated at a desk. That's all, just a man and a desk on a wilderness plateau. Redford knows that the official was air-lifted in for the tour, but that doesn't make it any less strange.

After landing, Redford and several other men jump from the helicopter, Redford moving with more alacrity than the rest, as if he is controlling rage. As they reach the desk the man rises and begins to recite a speech. Redford doesn't bother to remember exactly what the man says, but if it is similar to other SCE copy it probably goes like this:

"Good Morning. My name is Doug. This is Nipple Bench, one of several proposed sites for the construction of the 3,000 megawatt Kaiparowits Power Project which will bring needed electricity to cities in Southern California and Arizona and reduce our nation's dependence on imported oil."

Redford is barely listening. He is looking across the land, which is covered by sagebrush, rabbitbrush and brigham tea, and imagining the plant: 4,000 acres of industry; a 2,640-foot reservoir, a 60-million-cubic-yard ash disposal area, 8,400-foot-long cooling towers each with 10 cells blowing steam and a main power block 1,500 feet long, 750 feet wide and 250 feet tall, a roaring compression of fire, technology and power dominated by 4,800-foot-high stacks, each stack producing a pale brown stream against the blue. The man continues:

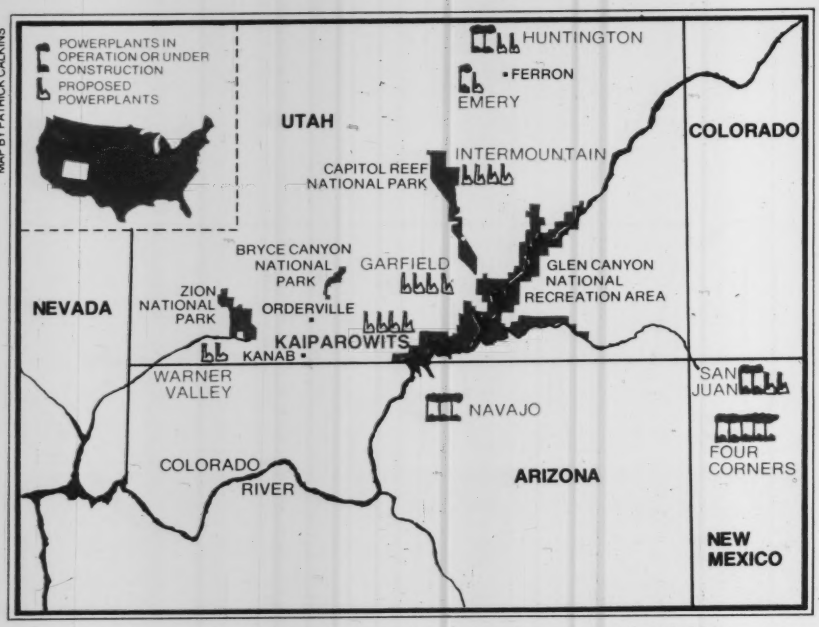
"Under this plateau lies over 15 billion tons of recoverable coal, which will be mined underground a few miles east of this location by about 2,500 miners and moved to the plant by conveyor belt. The plant will burn 33,000 tons of coal per day."

The helicopter engines, whining down throughout the speech, finally stop. The voice seems louder.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN LARRALDE

PAROWITS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN LARRALDE



The map shows operational and proposed power plants amid the 10,000-square-mile area of national park and forest lands.

"As you can see, the land here is generally of little value to anyone. It is a difficult area to reach, potentially valueless except for its underground mineral riches."

Later, remembering the pounding helicopter and the man at the desk in the wilderness, Redford says solemnly, "It became something of a nightmare."

The second scene is set to the sound of shouting. It is at the Wahweap Lodge, about 15 miles from Nipple Bench, on the shore of Lake Powell, the dammed Colorado. It is January 10, 1976, and the shouting comes from within the lodge. This is a press conference called by seven activist environmental organizations to dramatize their opposition to the construction of the Kaiparowits Power Plant in an area surrounded by six national parks which depend not only on spectacular land forms for their attraction but also on their remarkably pure air. The conference, organized largely by the Sierra Club, has gathered the press like a posse to a bank robbery, but unfortunately the club, tactically obtuse, has failed to invite anyone from the plant's home, Kane County. So Kane's people, who have the most to gain or lose, have invited themselves. About 100 of them disrupt the meeting, carrying signs: "This may be your playground, but it is our home," "Don't burn coal, burn Environmentalists," and "Stop Kaiparowits; Sponsored by Arab Chapter of Sierra Club."

In the crowd is a trio of faces now familiar to me as the leadership of Kane County's support of the plant: Sterling Griffiths, 38, county commissioner, standing thoughtfully, arms folded, perhaps chewing on a toothpick, consuming ideas. James Carrico, 37, the rambunctious, red-haired, relatively rotund Catholic bachelor in a Mormon town who can resist neither alliteration nor conflict and who, even as the speaking continues, is probably working on another epithet: "Pompous prevaricating purveyors of preservationism." And Roselyn Wilcox, a tall blonde whose pretty face upstages a poor complexion. Rose, or, as Carrico likes to call her, Hot Roxie, is 28, divorced and the mother of two children, but by the restlessness that dominates her she might as well be a 27-year-old schoolteacher of another time, the woman who ran off to Bolivia with Cassidy and Sundance, Etta Place.

The meeting continues despite interruptions. Among the speakers is an air quality scientist, who says:

"Projected emissions from the Kaiparowits plant combined with the existing Navajo plant (just across Lake Powell) will amount to 234 tons per day of sulfur dioxide, and 446 tons per day of nitrogen dioxide, which will amount to 53 percent of the Los Angeles Basin's emissions of nitrogen dioxide."

From the back of the room comes a woman's voice, adding up the frustrations of the 13 years that the Kaiparowits plant has been just a Flying Dutchman, showing itself occasionally in a mist of figures and them blowing away, carrying its cargo of fear or riches to a receding shore.

"You keep giving us statistics," she shouts. "Let's talk about people."

People. I come to Utah to meet the people of Kaiparowits, and the first place I stop is Redford's Sundance ski resort near Provo, to talk to the guardian of the plateau. We meet in his home in the evening beside the huge rock chimney he and his wife built together when they were not yet rich, and he sits backward on a small white chair, arms on its back, characteristically folding his lip with one hand and talking. The face is the Sundance Kid's, although there is a streak of grey in the mustache, but the abundance of words is Redford's alone. It is as if all those lonely, masculine, silent parts he has played have bottled him up, and in private he explodes.

"I came here to get away from any kind of development. I came because it was the most beautiful spot I'd ever seen. I came over that ridge over there on horseback; I was just milling around this country because I was attracted to it, because you didn't hear anything about it, because you didn't hear—you heard about Mormons and sheepherders and things like that. . . ."

As we talk, I get short glimpses of his earlier life: of his youth in Santa Monica and the San Fernando Valley—"a big pillow settling over me"—where his rage against authority was born; of the early days abroad and in New York City, where he gave up trying to be an artist and turned to acting, and where

The Kaiparowits Plateau is spiked by steel posts marking coal prospects, as if someone has come to finally pin the free land down

he put down roots of hardship and affection, which he maintains; and of his love for the land, which grew at the same time as his love for New York. When he talks about the evolution of his appreciation of the wilderness, it seems to me he is describing a familiar pattern. The early Redford, working his way up in his profession, finds a home in Utah and a small ski resort satisfying enough to his needs for privacy. But as his life grows more complex, now involving flights from New York to Los Angeles, to location, to New York, and greater demands on his endurance and his skill, he finds that he

Michael Parfit last reported for NEW TIMES *on America's new poor.*

needs, in addition to Sundance, a purer solitude. Similarly, in the most urban decade of our nation's life, backpacking became a major sport. Whatever is so valuable about emptiness and silence, we're all looking for it, and Redford found it in Southern Utah, the land of Zion, Bryce, Canyonland and Capitol Reef national parks, and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. This was the country into which Sundance and Cassidy could vanish, where only the best tracker, the Indian, Lord Baltimore, could follow, and where even he was stymied. "It's overwhelming," Redford says. "So much so that I pushed hard to get *Butch Cassidy* shot in and around Zion and we shot a lot of *Jeremiah Johnson* there. Making it a part of your living and work experience seemed to be the ultimate satisfaction." Redford did not know, at first, about SCE's plans.

The words spill out. We sit around the fire because he finds it hard to keep his multi-windowed home warm in winter, even with the propane furnace roaring, and he talks. Occasionally he drinks from a pewter tankard of beer and occasionally, almost as if inserting a pause, he scratches his head violently. I have a vague but lasting feeling of attending aristocracy, not because of trappings—he lacks them—but because of the unaffected confidence that he wears.

"It's literally very prehistoric down there," Redford says, eyes gleaming, firelit. "You feel it, I don't have to talk about it. You feel it. It means a lot, it fills you up. When I go back to New York I feel like about 12 feet. I feel powerful, I feel like I could take on the City Transit Authority. So in the beginning I just sort of luxuriated in this undiscovered atmosphere down there and, wham, suddenly I heard about Kaiparowits."

When he first moved to Utah Redford's love of country was, like most of the things that affect him deeply, a private matter. It took the Utah Highway Department's plan to build an eight-lane freeway near Sundance to pry him out of his reticence and into the public arena. That battle, which he has so far won, helped clarify his attitudes: it became a straightforward matter of the beauty of a canyon versus the inhuman forces of the department, whose bulldozers were "poised in the mouth of the canyon." Good guys and bad guys. "I think of them as villains in general."

When Kaiparowits hit his consciousness it met all his criteria for a public fight: first, it affected him personally. "Public credibility and privacy are both very valuable to me," he says, "and I don't believe in squandering them on

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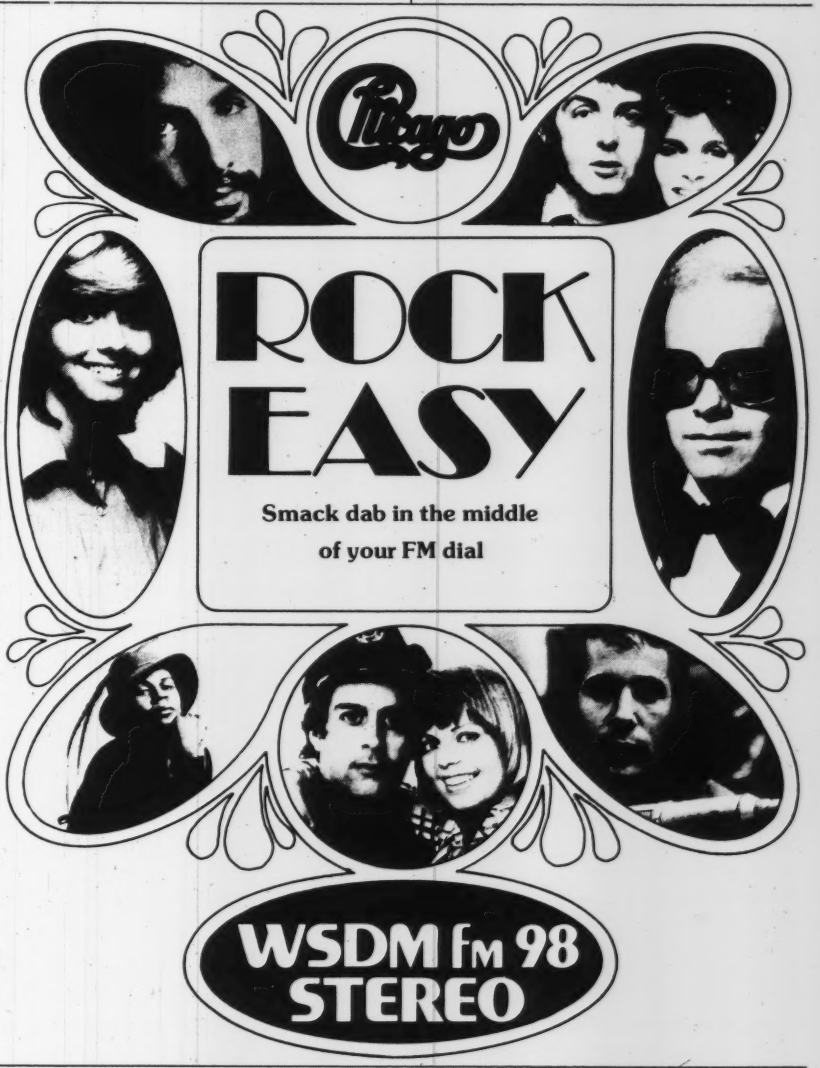

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somebody else's needs all the time. It has to be something that I'm moved at the center by, otherwise there is really no point." And the battle lines were clear: pure beauty versus old-fashioned, faceless, industrial progress. Redford's love for the great desert of Southern Utah and Arizona has always been affected by the work of Edward Abbey, author of *Desert Solitaire* and *The Monkey Wrench Gang*—a man who advocates anarchy in opposition to all development and, as the people of Southern Utah remind you with some bitterness, a man who once wrote that he'd rather shoot a man than a rattlesnake.

But Redford knew enough about tactics to realize that "even though in my gut I was against it and felt that it was wrong, I couldn't come out and say so because I had no facts to support it." So he approached the Environmental Defense Fund and offered to raise money and publicity for an attack on Kaiparowits. EDF agreed. Now the legwork for Redford's opposition is done by Mary Belle Bloch, the Logan, Utah, EDF's southwest energy specialist. Redford's contribution has been largely to make himself available to the press to talk about Kaiparowits, which, since he is so unavailable otherwise, has contributed to the issue's prominence.

Redford's opposition platform is based on several planks. Among them are:

1. Need. Kaiparowits is justified by projections made by the participating companies themselves—SCE, San Diego Gas and Electric and Arizona Public Service. These projections are based on long-term trends and depend more on increases in per capita consumption than on raw population growth. In the light of changes in energy habits since the oil embargo and subsequent price explosion, the figures are suspect. SCE, for example, predicts a 147 percent increase in per capita use between 1975 and 1985, but between 1973 and 1975, average use of SCE power actually dropped. California's own Resources Agency has expressed concern that the predictions may be so inaccurate that a surplus of power will be caused by overconstruction, leading to a situation in which "growth will be encouraged to fulfill demand forecasts and . . . proposed conservation efforts will be curtailed." An unofficial staff report of the state's Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission attacks the state's own energy growth figures, suggesting that the California Public Utilities Commission overestimates the needs of the state in 1984 by 7,499 megawatts. There are whole states that run on less than that. The instability of the growth predictions has been supported by the withdrawal of one participating agency from the Kaiparowits consortium, leaving 18.6 percent of the project's power unallocated, and by the recent decision of the rest of the companies to put off development for a year, ostensibly because of stalling tactics by environmentalists.

The Kanab Circle Drive-In is headquarters for Kane County's pro-power troika: from left, Wilcox, Griffiths and Carrico.

2. Water. The Kaiparowits plant will consume about 50,000 acre feet of water annually from Lake Powell. This is less than 1 percent of the lowest estimate of Colorado River water available to the river users upstream from Glen Canyon Dam, but the river is already overextended. The point at which demand on the river will exceed its capacities could come as early as 1985. It is possible that this eventuality may not cause civil war between the states of Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and California, but the commitment of such a large quantity of water to produce power for an area outside the upper Colorado basin may not be the wisest alternative.

3. Air. The Kaiparowits area is currently zoned under the Clean Air Act as a Class II area. This zoning is part of a clever device used by the federal government to get around a 1973 court decision which held that air quality may not be allowed to significantly deteriorate, by defining various degrees of significance. Class I is, as Jim Carrico might say, positively pure. Class III is safe to breathe. Class II "applies to areas in which deterioration normally accompanying moderate well-controlled growth would be considered insignificant."

The Kaiparowits plant will, SCE says, emit 12 tons of particulates, 34 tons of sulfur dioxide and 250 tons of nitrogen oxides into the air each day. These quantities will probably meet Class II standards of insignificance, but whether or not the tourist looking out at the plant from Rainbow Point in Bryce National Park, 35 miles away, agrees with the federal definition of the word remains to be seen.

"The distance one can see could be substantially reduced," the draft Kaiparowits Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) says. "Visibility in the scenic region of Southern Utah and Northern Arizona could be reduced 10-20 miles, which would be an adverse effect on the viewer's perception of the open characteristics of the landscape and negating of the more distant topographic features. A study . . . sponsored by the participant indicates that reduction of visibility of this magnitude would occur infrequently." The phrase "a study sponsored by the participant" appears regularly in the EIS, giving the whole thing, which was written by the Bureau of Land Management, an aura of friendly cooperation between agency and industry.

This EIS assessment assumes perfect operation of the precipitators and scrubbers that make up the anti-pollution complement of the plant. Such perfection is hardly likely given the infant state of pollution-control technology and the problems already encountered by plants on line today. If there is a malfunction, the EIS concedes that "dense visual air pollution would drift into outstanding scenic areas. . . ."

But the point Redford and Bloch—and the air quality consultant who spoke at the Wahweap Lodge—stress is that the EIS, like a myopic student examining the effect of a single wave on a beach, neglects the broader picture. The four 800-foot-tall stacks of Kaiparowits will not stand alone on the Southern Utah horizon: 20 miles away are the three pillars of the Navajo Generating Station, a 2,250-megawatt plant already producing power for Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Southern California, and emissions for Lake Powell. In addition, three more plants, totaling 5,500 megawatts, are planned for Southern Utah, this bountiful land of coal and Class II air. Kaiparowits, Redford says, is the lead domino, but where is the regional study that will tell us what the total cloud of ash and oxides will look like, and what winds will carry it away? "I can't live with what I think is irrational planning," Redford

says, "I just can't live with it."

Redford has one particular memory to which he keeps returning during our talk, so much so that I think he wishes life could be that way. It happened in October 1975. He took two and a half weeks out of the schedule that couldn't afford the break, and he rode the Outlaw Trail from Wyoming to Arizona. "That's probably one of the best things I've done in 15 to 20 years." With a few companions he rode across wilderness and through small, dying towns, immersing himself in the West until one day he rode into a town called Atlantic City, and "everything looked to me sepia." Typically, the words pour out. "The only thing there is a mercantile store, and it was built in 1868, and it is still there with its potbellied stove and its big old bar, and a few old-timers in there and a couple of women in there that are just as tough as nails. Just tough. But I was so moved by them, all that heritage."

Usually a loquacious man. Redford was so profoundly affected by the ride on the Outlaw Trail that when he got back to New York, "I was so out of kilter I really couldn't make a sentence. I was just mellowed out. I had gone so slow from one place to the next. You walk a little bit, you ride your horse, you jog a little bit and if you cover 26 miles on a horse, that's a hell of a lot. One of the things the Outlaw Trail proved to me is that you can slow down and things get better."

Yet Redford is planning to ski the next day and then catch a plane, bound for Los Angeles for the final editing of *All the President's Men.* After that, he'll go to Denver and Louisville and Connecticut for previews and then back to L.A. We have only these few hours to talk about Kaiparowits, so I move the conversation back by saying that as much as we revere the frontier life, it seems that the nation's present development habits are rooted in a frontier mentality which believed in unlimited resources and thus permitted an ethic of plunder-and-move-on.

"I don't think so," Redford says, and suddenly any friendliness that was in the conversation shreds away. Now, I think, we're down to the core of his belief, which seems tied so strongly to the West's past. Redford's voice turns cool, understating passion.

"No," he says, "I always thought the frontier mentality was that every man had the right to control his own space." The conversation bends abruptly away, and we are talking about Hunter Thompson and Hell's Angels, and Redford seems to forget the little clash. But Kaiparowits is a story of many echoes and in Redford's words I hear the voice of the people of Southern Utah, Carrico, Wilcox, Griffiths, "Don't come down here with your fancy figures. Don't come telling us the way we have to develop our country, our lives."

As I stand outside at Sundance, late at night, watching the skiers leap down the slope from pool to pool of light, I am uneasy.

On the way down to the seat of Kane County, Kanab, I stop in the small town of Ferron, east of the Wasatch Front. It is a sleepy little town, surrounded by the brown fields of an open winter, with ranch homes on Main Street and backyard pastures cropped to stubble. It is a place of grey cottonwoods and grey juniper-post fences, each post uniquely crooked. Here and there clusters of old buildings lean in unison as if before the wind.

If you come into Ferron from the south, you don't realize what is happening. The most you see of the changes is the Cattle Country Mobile Park, a jammed shuffling of trailers across the street from Gardell Snow's house, where he has lived for 40 years, producing 5 children and 18 grandchildren. You have no way of knowing that the land next to the trailer court is worth $12,000 an acre.

"Public credibility and privacy are both very valuable to me," says Redford, "and I don't believe in squandering them. . . . It has to be something I'm moved at the center by, otherwise there is really no point"

But if you arrive from the north, as I do, the first thing you see as you come down from Castledale across the barren plains is the enormous green framework of the Emery power plant, standing on the horizon like a skeleton monolith, before which two thin cranes kneel in homage, offering gifts of steel.

Gardell Snow is the chairman of the Emery County Board of Commissioners. We talk in his home, in a living room filled with an organ, a piano and dozens of photographs of children and grandchildren. I am visiting here, 150 miles north of Kanab, to see what is happening in a county suddenly assaulted by major energy development. Snow, 65, explains it simply, like the old straightforward rancher that he is. There are two plants being bult: Huntington, nearly finished, and Emery, just begun, with a planned total capacity of 1,675 megawatts. The plants and mines are all in Emery County, which until a year and a half ago had a population of less than 5,000 people. It's 8,000 now, and Snow expects 500 new construction workers when warm weather comes, "so we'll be clobbered right good in the spring."

"At the beginning of my time as commissioner, eight years ago," he says, "our total assessed valuation was less than $10 million. Now it's over $52 million. There was talk at one time we might have to consolidate our schools with Carbon County to keep them open. Now we're building five new schoolhouses in the county. Studies say we should have 20,- to 34,000 people in Emery County by 1990. The problems it's causing are in the municipalities for water and sewer disposal." And law enforcement: a week ago two brothers fought, and one of them was killed.

Snow has two sons, Clifford, 37, and Stephen, 28. Until the plants and mines came, Clifford was scraping up a living with part-time work and Stephen was ranching far from home. Now they're both back, working underground for good money.

"It's good and it's bad," Snow says. "We lose our rural image. But I'm happy to see the county coming into its own."

On a Monday morning in Kanab, population 2,300, which is about 70 empty miles from the plant site, I talk doctrine over hamburgers in Jim Carrico's Kanab Circle Drive-In, field headquarters of a group called ALIVE. ALIVE represents a central part of this many-pronged controversy: the poor local people who, legend and Southern California Edison insist, must have Kaiparowits to survive. ALIVE stands for American League for Industry and Vital Energy. Acronyms are also among Carrico's weaknesses. Timidity, however, is not.

"Do you see what I mean, Boss?" Carrico is saying to me. Sterling Griffiths and Rose Wilcox have joined us in the crowded aisle between ice cream makers and the grill for an informal conference. "You can't call them environmentalists. They're preservationists, obstructionists. Here, look at this." He shows me a letter to the editor he has written.

"We are environmentalists," it says. "Our pioneering parents were environmentalists. They were sent to grapple with the hostile situations of Southern Utah and eke a living from it. They learned how to live with, adapt to and

utilize properly our environment. We carry on their tradition. We favor Kaiparowits because it is environmentally sound, economically necessary and culturally expedient."

He smiles slyly, his small eyes behind grease-speckled glasses glancing briefly at Rose and back to me. "Do you see what I mean?" He hands the letter to Griffiths to sign.

ALIVE is planning a trip to Washington to ask Congress to legislate Kaiparowits through as it did the Alaska pipeline, Carrico says, and he is also planning to sue environmental groups involved in the controversy on the grounds that they, in trying to delay the project, are committing a conspiracy in constraint of trade. Where will he get the money for the trip and the legal expenses? Oh, he says, from quilt raffles and auctions. Later he admits he is negotiating for contributions from several corporations, among them Allis-Chalmers, which manufactures engines used in power plant operations, and Utah International, a mining corporation.

As we talk in the drive-in, Carrico darting out of the conversation at intervals to take orders ("Good Morning, Boss! Smile!"), put fresh patties on the grill and turn the little ones, shrunken and boiling in their grease, it becomes apparent that each of the big three of ALIVE wants Kaiparowits for a different reason. Carrico, the short-order cook who holds a B.S. in education, English and Latin with minors in Greek and Spanish from Southern Utah State College, wants culture, a college of his own here in Kanab. "We're culturally inclined, but culturally deprived." Rose, afflicted with some of Carrico's energy but little of his direction, is just frustrated with the quiet, Mormon complacency of Kanab, much the way Redford was once angered by the big pillow of Southern California. Kaiparowits means change, action. "There'd be something to *do*." Sterling Griffiths, who bases his gas station and auto parts business in a smaller town called Orderville, about 20 miles north of Kanab, wants the tax base so that the commissioners will no longer have to spend all their time figuring out where to cut back. "The big thing is lower taxes and better schools and better hospitals and better services and better roads." Although Griffiths favors Kaiparowits just as much as the others, he is less restless and he places more value on the rural way of life. "I couldn't stand the city," he says. "I couldn't stand the traffic, being cooped up."

Carrico, who bubbles like his hamburgers with his favorite topic, talks energetically about the bleak, useless nature of the Kaiparowits Plateau. If the people who are attacking it, he says, would visit it and see the desolation firsthand, their opposition would, so to speak, lose steam.

I smile, restraining comment. I have just been talking to Ron Smith, owner of a lucrative river-running business and one of the few people in Kanab who opposes the project. Smith considers the Colorado plateau region unique in the world.

"I can't talk to Jim about Kaiparowits because he hasn't been out in it," he says quietly. "I'll tell you what. If I could take Jim Carrico for nine days down the Colorado, I bet he'd change his mind."

I visit the Kaiparowits Plateau with John Nelson, the county engineer. Nelson calls himself the first of the boomers, but he really came here to escape. Once the up-and-coming young engineer turned vice-president for one of the top ten engineering firms in the nation, he got tired of the pressures—having to have everything done yesterday—and quit to live in Kanab and help the county prepare for growth. Now, he says, "There isn't anything that has to be done *this week*, much less today."

"The first five years are going to be awful raw," says the county engineer. "But after that I think it will be kind of nice"

The trip takes all day. We bounce across barren grey mounds and up a sandy canyon under cliffs in Nelson's four-wheel-drive pickup, and Nelson, only slightly less talkative than Redford, points out the location of plant, mine and new town. The town, with which Nelson is most concerned, will eventually house 15,- to 20,000 people, and dominate the county.

"The first five years are going to be awful raw," he says. "There's going to be a lot of dust, a lot of equipment moving around. But after that I think it will be kind of nice."

A strange thing happens as we leave the Kaiparowits Bench. We succumb to an urge that Nelson seems to have been feeling all day: we roll rocks off a cliff. It starts with small skipping stones that sail out on the wind and float away. Then we graduate to football-size rocks that make small thumps in the abyss beyond our view. Finally, together we launch a 300-pound boulder over the edge, listen in awe to the silence of the long fall and feel the deep whump of its end. I've never done this before, and it both excites and embarrasses me. Afterward I wonder: if Redford's power—control of space—lies in keeping the land pure, undefiled, Nelson's must lie in the ways he can change it.

On the way back to Kanab, we look out across Lake Powell at the Navajo plant on the far side. "There," Nelson says. "I don't find that objectionable." Then he adds, in a tone almost sardonic. "But I'm an engineer; I think things like that are beautiful."

Late in the week I attend a meeting of the Kane County Planning Commission, of which Jim Carrico is chairman. I should have known it was his show: the press release called the meeting "the final program in the series PLANNING: A PLATFORM FOR PROPER PROGRESS." The group of about 25 people meets in the Kane County Courthouse and hears Dr. Ron Little, a sociologist who studied the ramifications of Kaiparowits in 1974, deflate most of their beliefs about what the plant will provide.

No, he says, all the young people are not leaving: 37 percent of the kids over 18 are still in town, and 50 percent of them are within one and a half hour's drive of Kanab. No, Kaiparowits will not improve everyone's life.

"You're going to have a large number of people in Kane County who do not think the same. They're going to come in and dominate your community, at least numerically. Right now law enforcement in Kanab takes place in a variety of very informal, practically unnoticed ways, but you're going to have 15,- maybe 20,000 people who aren't built on the same wave length. You tell them you disapprove, they give you a Bronx cheer. The county and the city are going to have to adopt patterns which are more consistent with big city living."

I leave Southern Utah on a windy, clear morning, and am immediately nostalgic. "We have a saying," Carrico told me, "the red sand gets in your blood and you have to come back." But I think that when I return, the place may have changed.

Alternatives, I think, what are the alternatives to Kaiparowits? A rail line from the mined plateau to a less scenic site in California? But that state's emissions standards are stricter than Utah's, which is one of the reasons SCE is

Redford, who lives north of Kaiparowits, settled in Utah "because it was the most beautiful spot I'd ever seen."

here in the first place. Reliance on other forms of fuel? We all know about Project Independence and what that does to oil, and we sometimes forget that coal itself is an alternative to nuclear generation. If we have to choose between smoke and plutonium . . . . Redford is building a solar-powered home at Sundance, and that's his great hope, but the energy momentum is all coal, oil and nuclear. What will it take for a nation to change direction, and who will furnish the power between? Growth rates may be uncertain, but the uncertainty is the rate, not the direction. What about conservation?

Conservation. I know why I was uneasy watching the night skiers at Sundance. If appreciation of wilderness is related to levels of affluence, which has been shown, and if consumption of energy is related to levels of affluence, which has been shown, then there is probably a relationship between consumption of energy and wilderness appreciation. Those of us who value the open spaces and cleanliness of the West, and there are many, look to Redford for leadership. But, discouragingly, he seems more trapped by the energy treadmill than we are. The champion of the uninhabited country uses more power for his films, his ski resort and his travel than do Carrico, Griffiths and Wilcox combined. I had asked Redford if he wanted to slow down and limit himself to smaller portions of energy. Looking back at the trip on the Outlaw Trail, he had said, "I'm for that, really in a big way. I think about this future rush we're into, you know, zap-zap-zap, I'm a part of that, sure, I'm a part of that, because everyone else is—and I'm caught up in the flow." Driving through his favorite park, Zion, cliffs red and abrupt all around, I am saddened. The more urban and demanding our lives become, the more we need the empty land, so we rage against the power plant that comes to diminish us, but we create it with our lives.

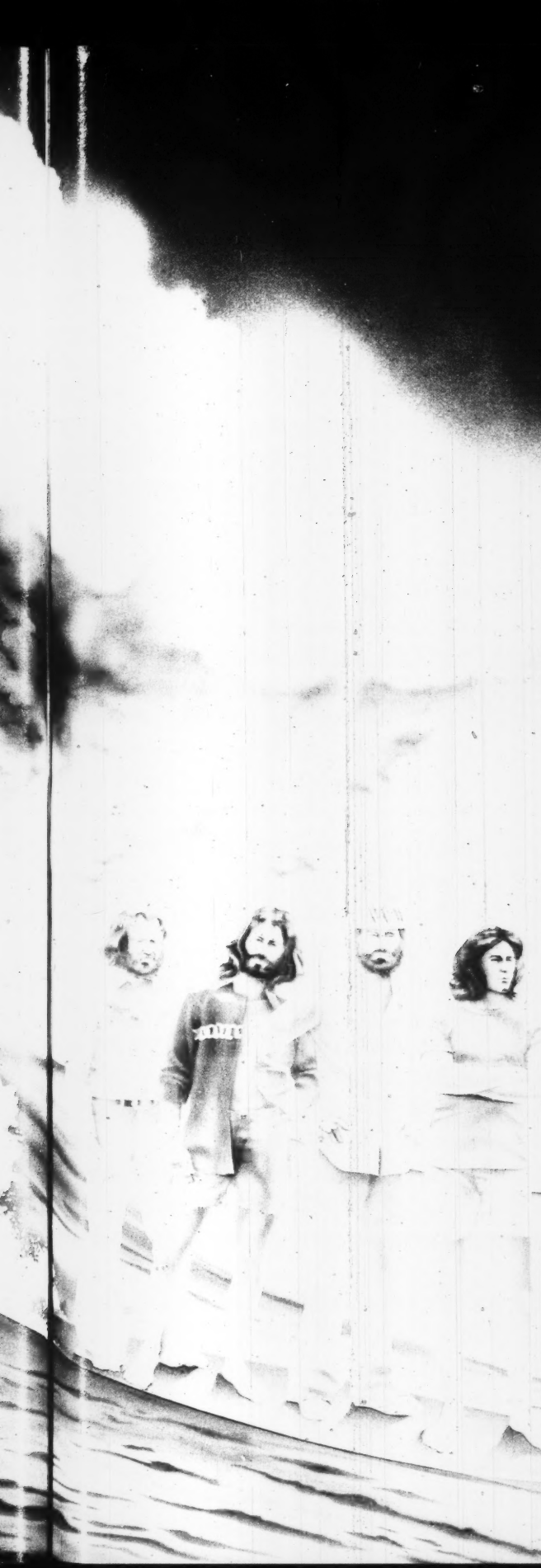
Kleppe may turn Kaiparowits down; if he approves it, which is more likely, it may be rejected by the courts; or Congress, now considering amendments to the Clean Air Act, may change the significance level of adjacent lands to Class I, which would force the plant either to move or to pipe the smoke out to sea. But if our use of energy does not change dramatically, the coal under the Kaiparowits Plateau will eventually be used, and industry will come to the sandstone sanctuary of Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Who will be hurt? Redford, certainly, but it's hard to generate sympathy for the rich and powerful. Carrico and Wilcox will love it: new action in a stale town. But Sterling Griffiths will not. The salvation of Kanab, he has always argued, is that the new town for the construction workers and miners will be located 60 miles away. "They'll be down in that part of the county and we'll be up here." But there's a valuable chunk of strippable coal right in Griffiths' back yard near Orderville, and a mine there is already being promoted as the logical successor to Kaiparowits. One morning in his Standard station I asked him what he would do if that coal is mined and if Orderville boomed with miners. Griffiths grinned wryly and shifted his toothpick. "Then I'd probably leave."

But I know, Ron Smith knows and Redford knows that every day there are fewer places to go, and the words begin to sound a bit like Cassidy and Sundance, wounded and loading their last rounds, talking about robbing banks in Australia while the Bolivian army massed outside on the adobe walls. ●

THE BEACH BOYS: RIDING A NEW WAVE

A whole new generation is turning out to hear replays of Sixties anthems. Says Mike Love, "We're inseparable from the white middle-class karma."

By Neal Gabler



On a small charter jet, Carl Wilson of the Beach Boys sits down next to me and hunches forward slightly to be heard over the thick hum of the engines. In the dim, yellowish plane light, he looks almost ethereal. "I've been thinking about the last time I went back to my old neighborhood in Hawthorne, California," he says softly. "I had this fantastic feeling. It seemed like such a big world when I was growing up. And now when I go back there it's just like. . . really small, you know. My car was too big to drive down the street. And then I saw a friend that I'd known since I was probably 9 or 10. He was still doing the same thing he was doing when I lived there. He was still in the garage working on a car. And it blew my mind. I felt—I was overwhelmed, like I was really going to have a very emotional experience, cry or whatever." He pauses to suck some coffee from a thin porcelain cup. "And when I was there I looked at our house, because he lived across the street. And I was looking over at it and I remembered the way it was when I grew up in it. And then after I moved away, my dad—you know we all had a lot of money and all that stuff—rebuilt it and it looked really different from all the other places. It had a lot of big tropical trees. It was really a mind-blower." He rolls his eyes away and tilts his head back again. "I think I just wanted to hang on to what was, and yet, by looking at it, I got to see the distance we've been since I was 12 or 13. Now we are flying on this crazy thing. I think it's incredible."

What is really incredible is not how far the Beach Boys have come, but how long they've managed to stay there. In the fragile ego-world of rock, where groups last as long as mayflies, the Beach Boys have remained intact for 15 years, practically an eon in their business.

Now, after nearly a decade of obscurity, the group has triumphed, beaten the cultural rap and become more popular than ever. "Good Vibrations"? Absolutely. Today, the Beach Boys represent the unchallenged kings of the 1970s rock 'n roll revival. Last July, during a smashing tour, the group set a record for the highest single-

WIDE WORLD

The way they were: the Beach Boys toward the end of their first peak in 1966. L. to R.: Mike Love, Brian Wilson and Carl Wilson. Bottom: Al Jardine and Dennis Wilson.

grossing concert ever. Three of their albums—full of early Sixties hits—made *Billboard*'s top 150 in 1975, and wherever the group plays, it is to sellout halls, at a $25,000 minimum. Twyla Tharp has written two ballets to their music, a concert with the Joffrey Ballet is being planned and Susan Ford has talked of inviting them to the White House. Investigators even found one of the Beach Boys' albums in Patty Hearst's otherwise explosive cache.

"Of course," smiles lead singer Mike Love. "She was a white kid growing up in America. If she didn't have the Beach Boys, then I'd have to say she was missing something."

Something a lot of people apparently want back again.

The main reason the Beach Boys have survived is that they are a family: the three Wilson brothers (Brian, who is 33, Dennis, who is 31, and Carl, who is 29); their cousin, Mike Love; and their high school chum, Alan Jardine. "I slept in the same room with Carl and Brian all my life," explains Dennis. "I've known Michael all my life. Alan all the way through school. We've done everything together. Shit, eat, fart, cry, laugh. Everything." Each member will tell you that there have been enormous tensions; it's not always smooth. "But even though they might do something outrageous," says Mike, "something that would break up another group, or cause a huge fight, the end result is that he's your cousin or your brother, and you've been through a lot of stuff together, and you love him."

Because they've been together so long, they have a history now, a cultural record. The Beach Boys are recounting that history while lazing in an exclusive Chicago hotel before a concert. The record begins, needless to say, back in California. Love grew up in Baldwin Hills. The Wilson brothers and Al Jardine grew up in suburban Hawthorne, just south of Los Angeles and a few miles from both Baldwin Hills and the beaches that rim the ocean. "We had a shitty childhood," Dennis Wilson says. "I mean my dad was a tyrant. He used to whale on us, physically beat the crap out of us. I don't know kids who got it like we did. His big number was, 'Don't ever lie. And if you lie, I'll beat the shit out of you. But if you go outside when it's raining, I'll beat the shit out of you!' So you go outside when it's raining and you lie to him and you get hit twice.

"I thought it was insane. But when we did anything with music, he'd just. . ." Dennis starts bawling like an ailing foghorn and rubbing his eyes."'. . .Gawwwd! It's beautiful.' Like a baby. And that was so real to see your father go through an experience, a change over your music. So we'd been singing since we were babies. We got off on the idea that three guys could sing harmony."

Wilson has long, wild hair parted down the middle and a full beard, and he looks like a radical from the mid-Sixties plopped down in the middle of splendor. Though he detests the label, he has gotten the reputation over the years as the wild Beach Boy, largely because Charles Manson lived with him for a short time before the Tate murders ("There's some things I don't talk about. It's kind of a shame. One day in a book maybe") and because he is the protagonist of the surfing legend. Back in 1961, as the story goes, Dennis came home from a hard day of surfing and asked brother Brian to write a song about it. "Surfin' " sprung full-blown from Brian's head. Their father, Murry Wilson, a businessman and frustrated musician, peddled the song at various record companies, until Candix bought it and dubbed the group the Beach Boys. "Surfin' " was a hit, Capitol Records signed and promoted the group and the rest is history—theirs and ours.

"Before the group, I was in the oil business for a while. Gas and oil, check the tires." In his room, as he talks, Mike Love stretches his long body over two chairs. His brother Stan was a professional basketball player in both the NBA and ABA, and the resemblance is obvious. At 34, he is the oldest Beach Boy, and his red hair is thinning, but he has a way of crinkling his face into a smile and gulping for laughter that makes him look 14, even with his red beard. "I was a sheet-metal apprentice at my father's factory too. I was married. I married a cheerleader when I was 20 and she was 18 and just out of high school. We 'had to get married.' " He traces quotation marks in the air and laughs. "Which is in the Great American Way. That's where we glean our experiences. So I had two jobs. And when we made this record and it became a hit, the decision had to be made to leave my father's firm. I can remember my dad saying, 'Well, what if this doesn't work out?' And I said, 'So if it doesn't I'll be back scraping shit off of metal.' I had no idea we'd be as successful as we are today for as long a time. But I thought it was worth taking off a year. So far it's been a pretty long year."

In fact, a year later the Beach Boys had turned out several hit records and had nearly every teen in America communing with California and hyperbolizing pond ripples into waves. "Surfing was the hottest craze since candy," says Dennis. "Everybody had something to do with being a surfer. I mean, you could not go anywhere without seeing woodies. I can remember as kids driving to the beach. We lived like five miles away, and there was a hill. There are always little hills before you get to the ocean. And I can

Neal Gabler is a graduate student in film at the University of Michigan. This is his first piece for a national magazine.

see guys standing up on the back seat trying to be the first one to see the water. I mean our whole life was the ocean, and those things in our songs were real to us. What else did we have?"

Even for those of us who had never seen an ocean, the surf had profound and satisfying meanings. For any white kid growing up in Camelot, the Beach Boys seemed to condense the fantastic psychological space we called California, the comfy, expanding materialist ethos, and the sweet vibes of the high school subculture before it became a counterculture. When you listened to "Surfin' U.S.A." or "Surfer Girl" or "California Girls," you heard your own silly high school dreams perfectly articulated. When you listened to "In My Room" or "Be True to Your School" or "409," you heard your *experiences* being articulated. These were nothing less than folk songs for white, suburban, middle-class teens. That's because the Beach Boys were doing the same things we were doing and writing songs about them.

"On Saturday sometimes I'd sit on the curb with Louie Marrado and let farts and light 'em," Dennis recalls. "Skateboard all night. 'Let's go over to Margo's house and look in her window.' Play volleyball at the church. When we were driving—'Let's cruise A & W Root Beer.' At that turn in my life when I started getting a little bit of freedom out of the house, when I could stay out until midnight and sneak a beer—that's when the group happened. We went through all our teenage trials and tribulations on the road and in the music."

The result was a long string of hits and greater record sales than any other American group before or since. They were primitives, and their music was bathed in sentiment and sentimentality, but the sentimentality was credible because their fans had felt the same things and in the same ridiculously simple terms. That's why the Beach Boys could reify in their music a zillion wavering signals of American pop culture, while other, less naive, rock stars were out swiping T. S. Eliot's hubcaps. "When you're growing up, 17 or 18 years old, and you were going to the high school prom, and your dad gives you the keys to the car, gives you money to buy a corsage, gives you some more money to take the girl out after the date," says Mike Love, "how the fuck are you going to sit there and say on the other hand, 'OOOOOOOOO-weeeeeeee! My baby's left me and what a drag,' and all that shit? Aspersions have been cast on our musical and lyrical integrity because we haven't been intellectual enough. Well, how the fuck are you going to get intellectual about a love for a little girl who spends all day on the beach? All you know is that you've got your teenage hard-on, the total hots, and so what's to intellectualize, I ask you."

The music itself was a combination of Chuck Berry and the HiLos, and the harmonies were so tangible you could almost bite them right out of the air. Carl says, "The lyrics for us were secondary. Because for us, it was the feeling we got, the experience we had of making the music. It was a very pure thing. And the lyrics were only a vehicle for our music."

While it lasted, the Beach Boys were the troubadours for a large segment of America. Then, around 1967, came the sudden fall, which didn't devastate them financially (they were set), but which wounded their pride. "There was a time," remembers Carl without a trace of bitterness, "when the Beach Boys were an uncool thing to be into." In some unregenerate precincts, they still are. Though most of these skeptics probably haven't heard any *new* Beach Boys music since 1966, nearly a decade, they seem to feel that they've grown up while the Beach Boys, like Peter Pan, never did.

"In 1965, when we did an album called *Summer Days, Summer Nights,* it started to bother us, doing this same stuff, because we thought we were trapped into having to sing about a certain thing," says Carl. He is soft and dreamy and a bit chunky. When he talks, he rolls his eyes lazily, and it is a little like watching a beatific gyroscope. "We'd been traveling around the world and having our experiences open up for us. So we were kind of humored at that time because people were saying, 'You guys are wearing striped shirts and white pants.' And we were going, 'Yeah, that's right. That ain't us, because the thing we were and are is the experience we create.' We were getting whomped on for wearing a particular kind of clothing, but we still experienced ourselves as valid musically."

Though a lot of teens might have denied it, the Beach Boys were maturing too. And they were concerned. They played benefits for the antiwar movement, and Carl fought through the courts for six years as a conscientious objector. Musically, the *Pet Sounds* album (1966), which includes "God Only Knows" and "Wouldn't It Be Nice," was pivotal. "A lot of people say *Sgt. Pepper* was the first concept album," says Carl, who acknowledges his respect for the Beatles. "But the truth is that *Pet Sounds* was really the first. It was thematic musically." On the album there was no mention of surf or

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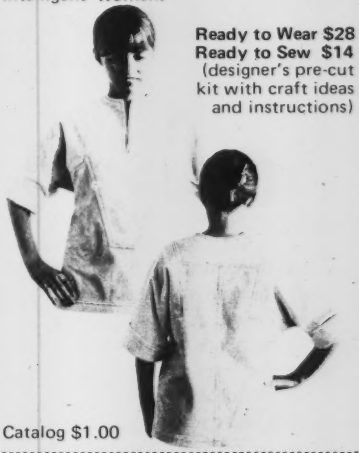

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cars, only the post-adolescent pangs of someone (Brian Wilson) trying to come to terms with his life. The songs are mature and introspective, and the backups are so much more fully orchestrated than in the earlier albums that they are nearly symphonic. That album was followed by the classic single, "Good Vibrations," with its tempo changes, its cushion of sound, the eerie inclusion of music from a theremin and its simple mystic images. But the music wasn't political, it was personal, and the Beach Boys' general attitude, as Carl summarizes it, was that "politics is not necessarily the highest expression of life."

With the Vietnam War raging, and the seemingly sun-kissed days of the early Sixties gone, some people disagreed. Insofar as the counterculture revolted against both complacency and its own bourgeois roots, the Beach Boys were doubly cursed; they seemed complacent, and they were certifiably bourgeois. But the group blames Capitol Records for the slide, not the cultural change. "That's exactly why the decline was the decline," bristles Dennis. "Because of marketing. Because of packaging. We were so young when we signed a contract that Capitol could do virtually what they wanted to do with our records. Everyone has his own idea of how to sell a product: We'll put posters here. We'll call it the beach surfer buggy. We'll sell. . . . And pretty soon the public is beat to death with the surfing routine, the car routine, the blah blah blah routine. And they say, 'The fucking Beach Boys are just a plastic bunch of shit.' And then they grow up, right?

At the same time the aesthetic front of the counterculture was generating protest rock, it was also fissioning into blues, flower rock and drug rock. But, again, the Beach Boys were disregarded, aliens to the kids with whom they had grown up and for whom they had supplied dreams. "When we were getting to the end of our contract," Mike recalls, "Capitol wasn't promoting us because if they did, they would have had to spend enormous amounts of money to re-sign us. The San Francisco flower power people were saying peace and love, and we were geared right into that. But it never got transmitted across the media as well as the surfing and car stuff did."

Drug rock was a different story. "When drugs came in, we didn't want to commit to that," says Dennis. "I still smoke pot once in a while. Took acid a couple of times. Tried a little cocaine. Tried Quaaludes. I think I've done almost every drug except heroin. I've done opium. I've tried it all. But I don't deal with my problems with a drug. You notice all the groups that are really drug groups. Where are they?"

The group did keep experimenting with sounds, melding other components into its California idiom, but no one was listening because the Beach Boys seemed tacky and irrelevant. "I'm not saying we would have been universally revered," explains Mike. "But we would have been a lot better off had Capitol said, 'This is the Beach Boys' *new music*.' They didn't do it, so we were consequently known to just a very small core of intellectuals and music lovers who dug the Beach Boys from the level of art. There was no media hype going on for the Beach Boys, and there weren't top ten records going every day because Brian wasn't into that anymore. He went into producing albums, concepts."

For its concepts in new albums, the group built its own studio in Brian's living room, formed its own label in 1967, significantly called Brother Records, and kept on plugging. The results were artistic if not overwhelmingly commercial. "Just after *Pet Sounds,*" says Mike, "we did *Smiley Smile,* which was the antithesis of the superproduction race: the Stones did this, the Beatles did this, the Beach Boys did this. Brian went whooooo, 180 degrees, to real light stuff, and it was totally avant in that it was going in no direction that anybody else was going." In their most recent albums, particularly *Surf's Up* and *Holland* (made in Holland), the sound is denser, richer, a palimpsest of diaphanous layers of music. It fills the room like a vapor. The melodies are more ambitious, the musical routes more circuitous and the lyrics far more contemplative and imagistically more complex. There is no music quite like it.

"I was a sheet-metal apprentice at my father's factory," says Love. "I married a cheerleader. We had to get married—which is in the Great American Way. That's where we glean our experiences"

"We went from a more direct look at the relative world of objects to a more introspective look at the self and then to a more universal awareness," says Mike. "The *Pet Sounds* album in 1966 began a more inner-directed approach to life and things. From there 'Good Vibrations' was a milestone, because we're directly dealing not with some outer phenomenon but with something coming from within, good vibrations. That's the direction we kept going."

The Beach Boys tried to refashion their public image to conform with their private one. They even joked about changing their name to Beach, short and pretentious. In 1971 and 1972, Jack Rieley, their manager at the time, worked to get them FM airplay and attract the college audience, and the group itself showcased its newer, more difficult material at concerts, reserving the oldies for the second half of the performance. "We wanted people to think we were good *now*," says Carl, "instead of looking at us as inferior to what we used to be. But the audience had different expectations."

I can vividly recall a concert in 1971 where the battle lines were pitched. The audience had come to camp it up and boogie in the aisles to "Surfin' U.S.A.," and from the first minutes it was like a showdown. The group's frustration was palpable. "We want to play something from our new album," Mike would announce, while the audience squirmed and snarled. "Play 'Rag Doll,' " someone yelled from the balcony, referring to the Four Seasons' falsetto hit. "Go soak yourself," Mike snapped, as the group slid into unfamiliar material. The tensions didn't subside until the Beach Boys came back ripping with the early hits. From its inauspicious beginnings, the concert ended with the entire auditorium on its feet (every concert does), but the whole experience left me with the distinct impression that the group would have rather been sunning itself back in California than having itself flagellated here in 1971's sinister version of 1961.

"The group had *treeeeemendous* pressure on it at that time," says Carl, trilling the word. "I'd been separated from my wife twice. Dennis had a couple of relationships falter. Michael had the same thing. And we had the problems with the record company, Capitol, rejecting us." At the same time, Carl was butting heads with his draft board, trying to get them to accept public service concerts as alternative service. After six years, he won his case. Then there was Dennis' involvement with Manson.

And finally there were Brian's continuing problems. Back when the Beach Boys were younger, Brian wrote all the music, arranged it, produced it and sang the lilting falsetto leads while Mike sang the deeper, rawer songs. He invented the rich harmonic idiom that had become the group's trademark, and at the unripe age of 20 he seemed to creatively command

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an entire industry with the song structures he used, the bass lines he wrote, the arrangements he concocted and the independence he sought. But he was also shy to the point of being reclusive, insecure to the point of being neurotic, and that caused dissension and pain. Brian hasn't toured for a decade, preferring instead to concentrate on the music, and several breakdowns later he is no longer the "omnipresent, omnipotent dictator," in the respectful words of one Beach Boy. The rest of the group had to surface with their own musical expressions, and Brian became an elder statesman and collaborator, padding around his house like an exile, jamming occasionally with his friend Paul McCartney and constantly writing music, most of which he would never allow to be released. Brian is still a recluse; he doesn't travel, but the rest of the group have gradually come to terms with their problems.

TM was largely responsible. Carl shakes his head and grimaces without moving a facial muscle: "I've had the thought that had it not been for TM, I would have really had a hard time coping with all the pressures." The Beach Boys first met Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the giggly main franchiser of transcendental meditation, in Paris at a worldwide TV hookup for UNICEF. It was 1967. Maharishi was sitting in the audience wrapped in his white robe watching Ravi Shankar rehearse. "I shook his hand and he goes—" Dennis makes a face like a Buddha. "And all of a sudden I felt this weirdness, this presence this guy had. Like out of left field. 'Live your life to the fullest.' First thing he ever said to me. So the next day I went over to his room, and he said, 'Tell me some words of your songs.' So we told him the lyrics to 'God Only Knows,' and he goes, 'That's the sun rising and the stars and the planets and it connects with. . . .' " Dennis scratches his beard wisely. "So I said, 'God this is great!' And he said, 'We'd like to initiate you into the program.' I said, 'What does that mean? How much?' And he said, 'We'll just do it to you tomorrow morning.' So I called Michael and all the guys in London. 'C'mon down here to Paris. We're all gonna meditate.' And then I got my mantra, and as Maharishi was giving them to us he says, 'What do you want?' I say, 'I want everything. Everything.' And he laughed and we meditated together. It was so wild."

Maharishi prophesied that if they continued to meditate, they would become the most influential group in the world. (He told the Beatles that if *they* continued to meditate, they would stay together.) The Beach Boys meditated

hard. A few months after the Paris meeting, Mike Love took off for India to study with Maharishi, and both he and Al Jardine became teachers of TM. Then they planned a worldwide tour to introduce Maharishi to colleges and universities. But that was before TM became the chic way to raise consciousness, and few things *seemed* more incongruous (actually TM was a natural development from the early beach and fun philosophy, a spiritual counterpart) than our collective troubadour climbing out of a dune buggy to scale the Himalayas and meditate. The tour was booked into large halls, the small audiences were discourteous and the Beach Boys were forced to abort the project after two shows.

Only the last few TM-crazed years have vindicated them. In fact, one might even detect a cultural correlation between TM's popularity and that of the Beach Boys. Rick Nelson (not the singer) was West Coast coordinator for Students International Meditation Society when he met Mike Love and Al Jardine at a TM center in 1972. Mike invited him to dinner; he went to work as the group's sound man and was finally promoted to road manager. So for the last three years Nelson has seen every Beach Boys concert, which means he has seen the group over 250 times. "When I first started out with them, we were doing a lot of college gymnasiums. and since then we've started doing large, outdoor sellouts. No one can really say what's caused that, but my own personal theory is that the show is totally happy. I've never seen a down show. Night after night, it's up, up, up. The music is a positive, creative force (TM words). And people are ready for that these days. People need it or enjoy it or are looking for it."

At their recent concerts, the Beach Boys haven't played any new material (they have been working on an album for three years), but there is none of the old frustration that used to sour the shows. "I think we totally jumped out of the entrapment," says Carl. "I think it happened maybe a year or two ago when we stopped resisting our past and having people enjoy our older stuff." Mike Love concurs. "You never get tired of it. You see what those songs can do to an audience. It's fun and it's totally relevant. That's why we'll always have a public. There's no time limit now. We're like the Mills Brothers. A couple of them may die, they may change, but they've still got the sound." Dennis is even more sanguine. "I can tell you the day the Beach Boys will no longer exist." When? "Never. They'll be on stage in wheelchairs."

The way things are going for them, he may be right. There is a new generation of teens weaned on Nixon and glitter rock and without any positive, satisfying youth experience to cherish and stamp as their own. "I notice that our audience gets younger and younger," says Carl. "Four years ago we would play Carnegie Hall and schools, and we'd have a totally student audience. Last spring we played the Anaheim baseball park, and it blew Brian's mind to see 12-year-old people experiencing his music as new." For that generation, the Beach Boys' music transports them back to the early Sixties, when people did go to the prom and scamper on the beach. It's manufactured nostalgia, by the audience rather than the Beach Boys—but it works and you can't knock it. The new Beach Boys fans may not be able to celebrate the good times and the good things they have; there's been too much innocence lost for that. But they can celebrate instead an attitude they don't have toward these things: they can romanticize the romanticization of things, and assuage their middle-class guilt at having too much. Through the Beach Boys they can plug in to the legendary innocence of the early Sixties. In a sense, then, the Beach Boys are doing in music what Gerald Ford was supposed to do in politics. They represent a kind of wholesome virtue, and they stand in roughly the same relationship to Alice Cooper or the Rolling Stones that Ford once stood to Nixon. "I just think there's a lot of agreement," explains Carl, "that we're one of the real things."

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY NICHAMIN/BOOM GRAPHICS

The Beach Boys and supporting cast on tour last summer: The old hits are performed with new energy, and every night is up, up, up.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi prophesied that if the Beach Boys meditated, they would become the most influential group in the world. He told the Beatles that if *they* continued to meditate, they would stay together

But Mike Love has his own theory, and it sets the Beach Boys in some final perspective. "They're all digging the Beach Boys," Love explains. "And there's only one reason for that. It's not because the music is abstract or intellectual or the blues or anything like that. It is because it has reencapsulated the same things that honestly and really identify with all kids growing up in a certain socioeconomic strata, and our experiences are indigenous to that." Love's long fingers flit through the air underscoring his point. "The Beach Boys are very much products of our society, and we're inseparable from the white, middle-class karma. And that's why I think a hundred years from now people will listen to the Beach Boys' music, and they won't be listening to a lot of other groups. They'll study it the same way they study classical music, Beethoven or someone like that. And 'Fun, Fun, Fun'—a guy will sit up there and show a hologram of somebody running through an A & W stand in a Thunderbird, or maybe *American Graffiti*. And he'll explain to them: 'This is what it was all like.'" ●

Movies

Robbin' and Marryin'

By Richard Corliss

From Tracy and Hepburn to *Gable and Lombard*, the movies have characterized marriage about the way W.H. Auden did: as a combination of "sex, sentimentality and mutual backscratching." But with the breakdown of both traditional marriage and traditional movies, you'd think commercial filmmakers would feel freer to experiment with new perspectives and forms. Not so, from the evidence of two new movies. **I Will, I Will . . . For Now** tries to be hip, but ends up dislocating its pelvis; **Robin and Marian,** once it finds its stride, is a triumphantly anachronistic celebration of marriage as the meeting of true, middle-aged minds.

I Will, I Will sees itself as *Pillow Talk* with the lights on. But the formula sex comedies of the late Fifties and early Sixties resided in a silly wet-dream-world to begin with. Rock Hudson's he-man businessman, Doris Day's over-compensating career girl, Tony Randall's ineffectual "other man," even Thelma Ritter's sassy Irish housekeeper were pasteboard conventions that sprang from Broadway and Hollywood rather than from the America in between. But at least the tone—smirking innuendo—spoke to a national sensibility halfway between repression and prurience. America was just about to stick its head out of the closet; the mistake the old sex comedies made was in assuming it was the water closet.

So now we have Elliott Gould as the compulsive competitor (in the boardroom and the bedroom); Diane Keaton as the "ashtray-wiping, over-analyzed, dead-in-bed virgin"; Paul Sorvino, frustrated in his attempts to be either Caruso or Romeo; and Carmen Zapata as the sassy Hispanic housekeeper. The Gould and Keaton characters, married for a decade and then separated for two years, work as strenuously to be sophisticated as Hudson and Day ever did. Their Constitution is a "cohabitation contract"; their Bible is *The Joy of Sex*. Whereas Rock would take Doris to an isolated ski lodge to resolve their problems, Gould takes Keaton to a Masters-and-Johnson-type sex clinic.

But the changes in formula are only cosmetic, like glitter makeup on a Tupperware matron. The camera still concentrates on the ass-wiggling walk of a sexy young thing (and the sound track emphasizes her undulation with some strip-joint percussion); Keaton says of a bosomy rival that "her cantaloupes are always falling out"; Gould rhapsodizes about his ex-wife that "I still love that hard-nosed little dumpling." *I Will, I Will* is entirely worthy of the talents of its authors, Norman Panama and Albert E. Lewin, who between them have been responsible for such classics of concupiscence as *Not With My Wife You Don't, Boy Did I Get a Wrong Number* and *The Wicked Dreams of Paula Schultz*. It is also the least sit-through-able movie of the new year.

As Robin and Marian, Connery and Hepburn evoke memories of heroic movies past.

Robin and Marian proves the old adage that Hollywood can still do well what it always did best: create a world out of time in which larger-than-life characters (like Robin Hood and Maid Marian) experience passions more nobly and fully than we dare. But for its first hour, the film is really three movies jousting each other for supremacy: one good (a tiring Robin wins back his middle-aged Marian), one bad (the anti-heroic "realism" of 13th-century war games) and one ugly (the backdrop of medieval ignorance and squalor). But in the best Hollywood tradition, the Good win out—which can be seen as a victory of stars and script over the tendency of director Richard Lester to turn every period-piece canvas into a penny-postcard Hogarth.

As a legend, Robin Hood roamed not only through the county of Nottingham but throughout three centuries of English history. He was always portrayed in the chivalric tradition, young and robust, the compleat idealist ready to do battle for king or courtly love at the drop of a caprice. Sean Connery's Robin is something else: the Knight of Sherwood Forest as working-class warrior. Exhausted from 20 years of fighting for a mad, dying King Richard, he returns home wanting only to rest—if possible, in the welcoming arms of Maid Marian (Audrey Hepburn). But the Sheriff of Nottingham (Robert Shaw), who has flourished while Robin has almost perished, knows that the old soldier can't resist a challenge, even a suicidal one. And so, with Marian as a pathetically impotent spectator who has lost control over everything but the moment of her own death, Robin is drawn into a fatal duel at the sunset of the Middle Ages.

As always in a Lester film (notably *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, The Three Musketeers* and *Royal Flash*), there's a chorus of bit-players going about their small business and providing snide commentary on the puffed-up heroics of the leading characters, who treat them as so much meddlesome scenery. A soldier stubs his thumb while placing a heavy stone onto a catapult, and kisses it to make it better; an old woman complains when one of the Sheriff's men takes an egg from her market basket; a pair of trysting knights brush up against each other as if at a Saxon gay bar. But when the small-minded satire of these peripheral scenes rubs up against the Robin-and-Marian story, it doesn't strike productive sparks; it's simply abrasive.

Lester seems to have realized that he's milked this ploy dry in his other costume pictures, for he drops it halfway through the film to concentrate on screenwriter James Goldman's themes: the mellow moral weight of love and fellowship; the tug of war in Robin's mind between his desire to stay with Marian and his duty to fight against

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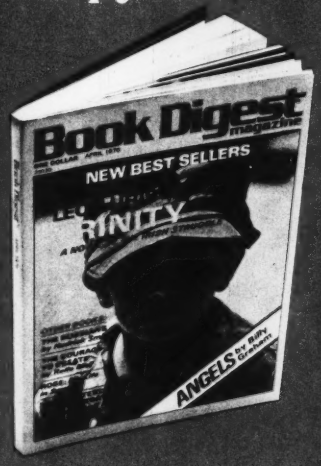

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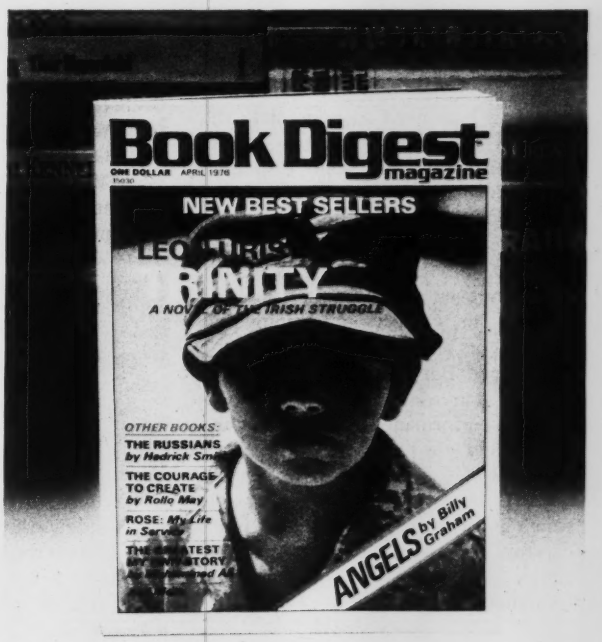

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King John; the folly of heroism, and the heroism of that folly. Once Lester discards his bag of inappropriate camera tricks, *Robin and Marian* moves onto its fatefully beautiful course—from satire to elegy, from Punch and Judy to Tristan and Isolde.

It does Lester and Goldman no disservice to say that *Robin and Marian* is an actor's movie rather than a director's or a writer's. It has as much to do with aging movie stars as it does with middle-aged love; and to respond to it fully you may need to appreciate the idea of a star's career. You may need to feel satisfaction at Sean Connery's escape from the Bond bottle and into more form-fitting roles that complement rather than exploit his unashamed, unself-conscious masculinity. You may even need to understand the bravado in Connery's retaining his strong Scots burr and his removal of the 007 toupee. But if you'd ever seen Connery in a movie before, you'd know from his performance as Robin that he's a star—and why he deserves to be. You could see it in the way he carries himself, in his awareness of exactly which gestures are suited to him, in his careful husbanding of that galvanic smile. These days, a heroic performance may be as out-of-date as a film that celebrates heroism; but in bringing it off, Connery helps validate not only *Robin and Marian* but our memories of heroic movies past.

From *Roman Holiday* through *Sabrina* and *Love in the Afternoon*, and up to *Two for the Road* and *Wait Until Dark*, Audrey Hepburn was the great movie actress of her generation. Though she never seemed to "act," Hepburn had a more assured technique than most of the screen's (or the stage's) Great Ladies; her voice alone was a Stradivarius that she played superbly. What Garbo did with her woman-of-the-world character, Hepburn did with the ingenue: she brought it radiantly to life as a palpable ideal. But she has not made a film since 1967, and during the filming of *Robin and Marian* she turned 46, a bit long-in-the-tooth for a gamine. There was some apprehension that Hepburn, like too many of the cinema's other ravishing young wraiths, would finally have gone the way of all bone.

Robin feels this same anxiety about meeting Marian after 18 years' separation, and the film capitalizes on this apprehension by keeping Marian-Hepburn off the screen for the first half-hour. Our first view of her provokes the same disappointment Robin must feel on seeing the love of his youth swathed in a nun's habit. The frail embodiment of idealism has become a desiccated cynic. But once Marian-Hepburn removes her wimple and stares devotedly into Robin's eyes, he and we recapture the magic of an actress-woman whose intense purity was always too strong for anyone but the hero—and the audience—to notice. "Am I old and ugly?" she asks Robin. "Am I nothing you'd want?" He can only embrace her.

Ingmar Bergman said that "film begins with the human face." *Robin and Marian* begins with the defeated, defiant face of a one-eyed man in the land of myopic King Richard, and ends with closeups of Robin and Marian, seared and serene in their grief and love. At 45, Connery has the face of a Rouault king—strong lines of dark browns and greys—with its youthful strength solidified through maturity. Hepburn's face suggests an older icon; age and the elements have burnished it, like an ancient and precious outdoor sculpture that is, miraculously, capable of warming into a beatific smile. These are faces that make criticism irrelevant. What Joseph McBride wrote about *The Bells of St. Mary's*, I say about *Robin and Marian:* "If you don't cry [at the ending], I never want to meet you and that's that."

Music

Lauro Nyro's restrained return

By Janet Maslin

Throughout the course of the March 5 Hartford, Connecticut, show kicking off her return to ostensibly live performing, Laura Nyro was dramatically upstaged by her right leg, or at least the lower part of it. None of the leg was supposed to be showing; Nyro's entire body was draped in a bright red version of those *Seventh Seal* getups she never quite popularized years ago, and, to further obscure matters, the lights had been cued to go down every time she entered or left the stage. (This latter bit of whimsy necessitated a flashlight crew to keep her from tripping over equipment, but it also insured her never having to come into the audience's clear view.) Yet the stage beams silhouetted one strong, muscular calf as it thumped rhythmically on the piano pedals, and the insistent motion of that limb provided quite an attractive contrast to the rest of what transpired. Aside from conjuring up the fervently energetic Nyro of former days, the pounding provided poignant evidence—as if any more were needed for those who witnessed this performance—that, lately, Laura Nyro keeps her passions very much to herself.

And so everything else about the show (those parts of it which Nyro presumably directed toward her audience) remained doggedly low-key. Once-galvanizing songs like "Sweet Blindness" and "The Confession" were now calmed down and smoothed over, delivered without the shrieks, yelps and wildly unpredictable tempo changes (the prevailing rhythm of the evening was a slowish species of clap-along) that had originally made them so torrid. Though Nyro was in fine vocal form, hanging stubbornly onto even the stray sour notes until she bent them into shape, her voice was no longer the instrument it had been; this time, she chose to use it very differently. In the past, Nyro would send her voice roaming all over the place, creating a sublime tension by constantly threatening to burst the bounds of her arrangements. Now the arrangements were loose, not at all constricting, dominated by nothing stronger than rolling percussion from her excellent, jazz-based band. Nyro's role in the proceedings could hardly have been described as coasting, but she was incontrovertibly taking it easy, stylistically and otherwise. The whole set lasted only 45 minutes, 15 of which were devoted to milking encores from the puzzled but appreciative crowd. Nyro didn't say much upon each successive return, but she would occasionally break into a sickly half-smile that marked a considerable improvement over her past days' stage demeanor. This, after all, was half a smile more than she would customarily have allowed.

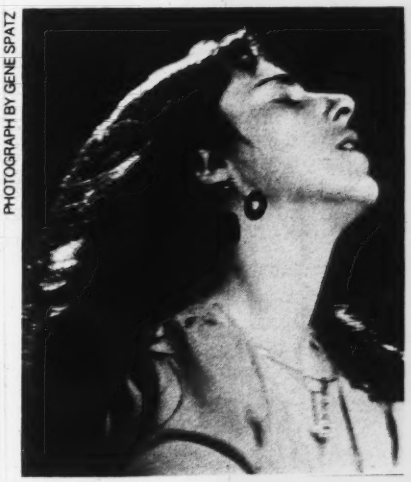
Remarkably (for someone who was reported to have been exceedingly nervous before the show), Nyro got

through the evening without manifesting the slightest awareness that anyone else was in the several-thousand-seat room. Near-total obliviousness has always been her concert trademark, to be sure, and yet a variety of rumors about her current state of mind indicates that she's been feeling friendly, outgoing, positively vivacious of late. Even the flaming red cover of her brand new *Smile* album (the color may connote either eroticism or chinoiserie, both of which figure prominently in her new music) hints that she's benefited from the four-year hiatus that her current Columbia bio, the writing of which Nyro apparently supervised closely, describes like so: "feeling drained and alienated by the high-pressured world of the money-fame entertainment business, Laura withdrew from the scene to find renewal both as a person and as a musician. She went to live in Massachusetts in a small New England fishing town on the ocean. At first feeling confused and ever-wondering, she began living a simple life, meeting new people, getting back in touch with nature and a more natural rhythm, learning through books and friends the enlightenments of the feminist movement, slowly writing music far from spotlights and pressures."

The physical withdrawal must have been pleasant, but its professional counterpart can't have mattered that much; even at the height of her commercial success, Nyro was the compleat prima donna, someone whose determined indulgence of her every whim set as influential an example as did her singing and composing styles. Whatever pressure Nyro may have worked under in those days, her trademark was always a reckless individuality, a seemingly total indifference to any outside influences. If her sense of commercial obligation had any effect at all on her music (except for her 1967 debut album, *More Than a New Discovery*, which had indeed been shaped to meet conventional melodic standards), it was a beneficial one; that pressure may well have heightened the tension that made Nyro's best work so unique. At the time of *Eli and the Thirteenth Confession* (and, to a lesser extent, *New York Tendaberry*), Nyro imbued her songs with an arrestingly authentic hysteria, a wrenching freneticism that never felt forced. Reveling in a murky feminine eroticism, agonizing over her dependence upon men, struggling with religious convictions and concomitant fears, she could illuminate her wildly energetic melody lines and impressionistic lyrics with a lunatic lucidity, composing from a vantage point right on the edge. The things that, on the evidence of her reasons for retreating, made her life difficult back then were also the things that made her great.

Smile, like Nyro's concert calm, shows her to be understandably unwilling to live out on the border any longer, not even for the sake of her art. Like Joni Mitchell, who appears to be going through a similar retrenching period right now, Nyro is intent on protecting whatever new peace of mind she may have found, and she's both famous and talented enough to get away with it. Perhaps in part because it's been several years in the making, *Smile* is a diffuse

PHOTOGRAPH BY GENE SPATZ



Laura Nyro in Hartford: fine vocal form and an occasional half-smile.

album, one that attempts to substitute an air of pensive, languid serenity for the old days' fire. It's hardly a fair exchange; *Smile* adds nothing new to the Nyro oeuvre and it lacks many of what seemed at one time to be her most basic attributes. But *Smile* isn't a failure on the order of *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* either, because Nyro hasn't made Joni Mitchell's mistake of ranging too far afield of her own internal source material. *Smile* is vaguely autobiographical and its choices of subject matter are no more whimsical than Nyro's ever were: "Timer" was a wonderful song that just happened to be about a feline, and the new album's "The Cat-Song" is an almost equally effective tribute to a pet named Eddie. "The Cat-Song" and "Money" are the only two *Smile* numbers, though, that have sufficiently driving refrains to recall the excitement of Nyro at her best. Too much of the rest of the album meanders, and even the Oriental-sounding coda to the title cut lacks the characteristic urgency with which, in the past, she might have injected such a flourish. *Smile* winds up feeling less like an album than a postcard, a pleasant and casual reminder that Laura Nyro is keeping herself alive, well and newly contented by jealously guarding her privacy—no matter how tentatively she may have tiptoed back into the spotlight.

****Say It Ain't So,** *Murray Head* (A&M). Stop holding *Hair*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Sunday, Bloody Sunday* against him; this previously undistinguished singer-actor has written and performed a startlingly lovely collection of songs, most of them taken from a musical he was never able to have produced. Delightfully fanciful, with much of the charm (and also much of the same personnel, including producer Paul Samwell-Smith) of the early Cat Stevens records. Head is a delicate yet powerfully insinuating singer with a gift for phrasing that breaks his otherwise unexceptional lyrics down into abstract sounds and sensations. A haunting, intricate sleeper.

****Sweet Harmony,** *Maria Muldaur* (Warner Bros.). Like Bonnie Raitt's recent *Home Plate* LP, this one stands up nicely cut by cut but, on the whole, suffers from too much homogeneity. And also from too much slinking around: only John Herald's fresh, raunchy "Jon the Generator" breaks the sultry monotony, and Kate McGarrigle's "Lying Song" provides a welcome touch of wit. Muldaur at her best is as much a personality as she is a stylist, but material as humdrum as most of this emphasizes her vocal limitations at the expense of her individuality and flair.

*****The Best of,** *Leonard Cohen* (Columbia). Cohen has at his disposal even better material, notably on his *Songs from a Room* and recent *New Skin for the Old Ceremony*, than a few of the selections included here. But the consistency and caliber of his vision make even the slightly lesser songs outstanding, and his explanatory notes are nonpareil. Sample commentary: "Lady Midnight" was written "in those days [when] it took me fifteen minutes to decide whether or not I should wear my cap when I went outside and a half hour whether or not I should take it off when I came back."

Books

A likely story

By Geoffrey Wolff

The Last Kennedy *by Robert Sherrill.* Dial (239 pp., $8.95).

Does *anybody* believe Ted Kennedy's version of the comings and eternal goings on and under Chappaquiddick's Dyke Bridge seven years ago? Louis Harris conducted a poll shortly after the death of Mary Jo Kopechne (on either the night of July 18, 1969, or the following morning, depending upon whose timetable—reason's or the senator's—you choose to credit) and Kennedy's televised explanation. He found that 53 percent of Americans did not believe Senator Kennedy's account of the death of Miss Kopechne and his own part in it. I would like to hear from just one of the 47 percent who presumably did believe him: I've never met one of them.

To believe that the accident transpired when and how the senator claims, it is necessary to believe:

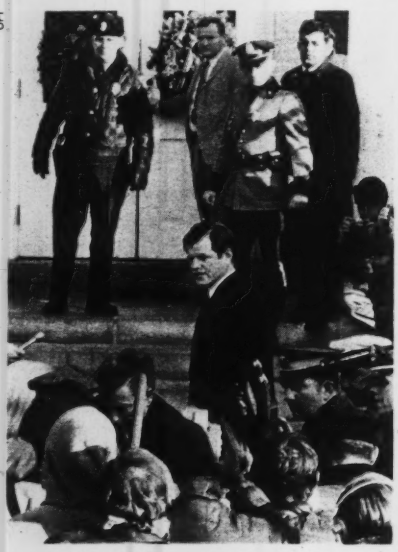
*That Deputy Sheriff Christopher Look, an otherwise unimpeachable witness, did not, as he reported, see the black Oldsmobile that was driven off the bridge when he claimed to have seen it, an hour and a half after Kennedy swore that it was arsy-turvy in Poucha Pond with Miss Kopechne dead inside it.

*That Senator Kennedy failed to notice a light burning in a cottage 50 feet from the accident site, across flat terrain, and that a girl reading by that light, who could hear a pebble dropped from the bridge into the water, could not hear an automobile smash through a guard rail and flip into the water.

*That Kennedy's cousin Joseph Gargan and Gargan's friend Paul Markham failed to ask Senator Kennedy what had happened to upset him during their drive from the cookout cottage to Dyke Bridge. That they dove repeatedly, unto exhaustion, to recover Miss Kopechne and less than 30 minutes later returned to the cottage dry and under control. That they permitted Senator Kennedy, who was by then hysterical, to attempt a dangerous swim to Edgartown, fully dressed and injured, and failed to inquire after his safe arrival.

*That the senator, miraculously recovered from the effects of his ordeal, could calmly discuss the sailboat regatta of the previous day with an acquaintance while he knew that a dead girl was in his automobile, and that he had not called for help to rescue her.

*That he in fact meant to drive Miss Kopechne and himself to the ferry, and mistakenly turned off a well-marked and paved road onto a dirt road and, sober as he claimed to have been, did not notice the change of surface.



UPI

Botched: Kennedy attended the Kopechne inquest, but few questions were resolved.

To believe all this imposes a heavy tax upon credulity, an insupportable tax, as Robert Sherrill meticulously demonstrates in this expanded version of his *New York Times Magazine* inquest written two years ago, an examination of the facts of Chappaquiddick popularly credited with having caused Ted Kennedy's retreat from presidential politics. Sherrill's piece was called "the political event of the year" by *Time*, and in retrospect, and in consideration of the self-devouring character of liberal Democratic rivalries today, this seems no hyperbole. Sherrill, a scrupulous and acerbic stylist, hopelessly addicted to the telling of plain truths, is not infatuated with his own motives: "This is a non-campaign book about a non-candidate that was put together with, I'll admit, capitalistic haste; my theory is that in any campaign year so bleak that men like Hubert Humphrey and Birch Bayh are actually spoken of as serious candidates, even a book on Teddy Kennedy, whether he's running or not, would just have to be viewed as a welcome diversion."

Sherrill's too hard on himself. His book is an important account of double-entry justice, or if that conceit does not precisely convey the serial miscarriages that followed Chappaquiddick, justice entered in two sets of ledgers, one for the mighty and one for everyone else. Sherrill does not pretend to know what happened the night of the accident; he does not credit the theory presented by Jack Olsen and Malcolm Reybold (in *The Bridge at Chappaquiddick* and *The Inspector's Opinion*) that the senator was not driving the Oldsmobile when it tumbled off Dyke Bridge, was not even in it. The sad, bleak fact of the matter is that Sherrill, together with most people who have an opinion about that night (and who has not?), seems to believe that what truly happened is not as ghastly as what the senator's mendacity has caused to seem to have happened. Worse offenses have been committed than the spur-of-the-moment decision of a young lady and a young, married man to go to the beach for a swim, a drink and what-not. If the senator was drunk, and killed Miss Kopechne because of negligent driving, he would have been obliged to live with an awful burden, and he would have declined in the esteem of most Americans.

But what has happened in the aftermath of Chappaquiddick is, as Sherrill shows, much worse. Senator Goldwater spoke for many Americans—he spoke for me, at least—during the black farce of Watergate, when Kennedy denounced Nixon's ugly ways: Kennedy is "the last person in the world to lecture us," Goldwater said. "Until all the facts involving the Chappaquiddick tragedy are known, the American people can do without moralizing by the Massachusetts Democrat." Kennedy, by his mawkish and unbelievable act on television a week after the accident, and by his arrogant refusal to submit himself to a full investigation of the facts of the accident, has surrendered his claim to moral authority. And this, as Sherrill shows, is a great pity, a great waste. For

Senator Kennedy is a good senator, and has shown courage and vision, and would without doubt make a better president than anyone currently running for that office, and would certainly have been a better president than any other Kennedy. (In Sherrill's judgment, with Kennedys the newer the vintage the better the quality: he likes Teddy best, Robert less, Jack not at all and the Founding Father least. Of JFK he writes: "he did not know why he wanted to be President. He arrived at the eminence without plan. He was the embodiment of ad hoc, rudderless." Of Teddy he writes: "to say that Teddy is the best of the Kennedys isn't saying much," but from Sherrill praise comes grudgingly and in miserly portions, and it is clear that he wishes Teddy would tell the truth about what he did to Miss Kopechne and get on with his life.)

Such truths you are not likely to hear. Kennedy hasn't even told the Kopechnes what happened to their daughter. Mrs. Kopechne has said that "he didn't bother to tell us anything. . . . It's as though we don't exist." Paul Markham says, "I see no necessity of talking about it—ever." Out of deference to his position, together with a sporting hesitation to rub salt in a sad man's wounds, Chief Dominick Arena allowed Kennedy and his party to hang around the police station for five hours, cooking up a defense, without asking them questions. Like the body of Miss Kopechne, spirited off Martha's Vineyard and out of Massachusetts before it could be subjected to an autopsy, the witnesses at the cookout were allowed by the Commonwealth to disappear themselves before they were examined.

Arena explained that "when a man comes in—a United States Senator—and says he was in shock, you have to give him some credibility." No, not "a man," a "United States Senator," there is that difference. Judge James Boyle, whose bungling assured that the inquest would be held in secret, concluded that "a reasonable and probable explanation of the totality of the above facts is that Kennedy and Kopechne did *not* intend to return to Edgartown at that time; that Kennedy did *not* intend to drive to the ferry slip and his turn onto Dyke Road was intentional." That is, Judge Boyle concluded that Kennedy perjured himself. But Judge Boyle did not issue a warrant for the senator's arrest on that account. As the judge said earlier, in a different context, "I will not keep a United States Senator waiting." It stinks.

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Final Tribute

By Mark Goodman

Spring 1955: the raw Ohio winter was coming to an end; buds sprouted on the shade trees that surrounded the Cuyahoga Falls High School campus. Every society realizes spring's rebirth in different ways; for us it meant the long trek to baseball practice with spikes slung over our shoulders and warm, furtive wrestling in the hushed cemetery that lay just the other side of the woods behind the school. Ah, but that spring was special to me; I would have to grovel in the gorse no more. For I was fast approaching the American youth's sacred milestone—the sixteenth birthday. And the night of my sixteenth birthday I was to borrow Chuck Llewellyn's convertible and go out with Cheryl MacDonald.

And if that wasn't the all-time big deal, then I'll be a dirty bird. Until that divine moment, you see, my mortification in that romance was extreme: Cheryl MacDonald was an Older Woman. While I was a wheel among the lower orders, and giddy over my success with this exquisite patrician of a Black Tiger cheerleader, having to bum rides with elder buddies from the football team (only athletics transcends class structure in the American high school) was bitter gall. But my freshly inked driver's license, and Chuck Llewellyn's convertible with Cheryl MacDonald beside me, would turn my birthday night into wine—or at least 3.2 beer.

God, it was glorious! Riding with the wind whipping Cheryl MacDonald's rich black hair around her face as she snuggled against me in her charcoal-grey-and-white Class of '56 jacket and the radio blaring "Rock Around the Clock" and "Earth Angel." Clear across to West Akron, pull in Garner's Drive-In and swing around the lot. Harried carhop in shiny pearl blouse and black short skirt. Burgers, order of fries, thick shakes. Then: recognition by rivals. Hey, it's Goodman from Falls High. Hey, Goodman, where'd you get the gunboat? Chuck you, Farlie, this'll lay rubber in second and cruise at one-zero-fiver. Yeah, all you're cruisin' for is a bruisin'. Yeah, you and what army's gonna give it to me? Me, myself and I, that's who. I'm shakin' in my boots, Waller. Last time I saw you the score was 35-13. Big Deal. Then: peel out.

Yes, there were several generations of us who alternately cringed and sighed as we watched *American Graffiti*, Hollywood's high-octane celebration of the convertible life. Because for us the convertible was not just a car, not something as prosaic as mere *transportation*. It was the epicenter of existence: living room, dining room, rumpus room, back porch and even (very rarely) bedroom. Convertibles were called everything from Make-out Wagons to the more graphic Cream Machines, but in truth they were more spiritually than practically romantic, fine for fumbling with the snaps of a 32B bra, but for anything more serious, Baby, It's Cold Outside.

PHOTOGRAPH BY R.J. SMITH/BLACK STAR

The generation after ours didn't waste time (so they say) with our hot, grasping preliminaries. Get It Off and Get It On is a philosophy for which the van is decidedly better suited than the convertible. Anyway, the convertible would have died its tragic death with or without their support, because the rest of a nervous nation was retreating indoors too, where it was warm—or cool. Says Randy Mason, assistant curator of the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, "Americans are prone to luxury, prone to practicality. They don't want to get their hair blown around. They like to ride around in a womb."

They didn't always; once the romance of the open road and the open car brightened the land. The early convertibles are the magical conveyances of post-World War I literature: Grace Caldwell Tate's magnificent Pierce-Arrow, Gatsby's "green leather conservatory" that "mirrored a dozen suns." At first it was actually cheaper than a comparable sedan, but the improvements of the Thirties (power tops, better weather stripping) made the convertible costlier. In that period, Norman Rockwell made the convertible standard equipment in the lives of American teenagers. Indeed, future archaeologists stumbling across early *Saturday Evening Post* covers will doubtless conclude that no one could purchase a convertible who did not look exactly like Archie Andrews.

All the improvements Detroit invented still could not make the convertible practical. The advent of air-conditioning and hard tops whittled the market down to almost nothing, and other factors nailed the tops down permanently. The sashaying carhop has been replaced by the sagging Colonel. Also, there is the miasma above, the concrete labyrinth below: ever ride in a convertible down the New Jersey Turnpike? So it has come to pass that Cadillac has produced 14,000 of the last convertibles, the 1976 El Dorado. They are selling fast—collector's items— and when they are gone there will be no more.

I suppose the loss of one more talisman of my youth won't be all that big a deal. Still, it is sad to reflect that I will never again ride with the wind in my face through the starry Ohio night with Cheryl MacDonald. ●

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